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Family Plays

Based on the novel by Lewis Carroll

Alice in Wonderland

Musical

Book and lyrics by Sally Netzel

Music by Beatrice Wolf

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Musical. Book and lyrics by Sally Netzel. Music by Beatrice Wolf. Based on the novel by Lewis Carroll. Cast: 4m., 4w., 8 either gender, extras. Doubling possible. Premiered with an elaborate production by the Dallas Theater Center, this two-act musical can magically turn your stage into a wonderland. The play deals honestly with Lewis Carroll's stories and characters—even Alice's fall down the rabbit hole. Sally Netzel has created unlimited opportunities for imaginative costumes, props, scenery and lighting. Beatrice Wolf's music inspires wonderful ideas for choreographing various scenes. *Alice's slow-motion fall down the rabbit hole is cleverly achieved by the use of projections on a scrim and entrance to the animal burrow by a sliding ramp down which Alice may slide and tumble. The play may be shortened by omitting episodes. Approximate running time: 100 minutes. Code: AH1.*

Family Plays

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(Netzel and Wolf)

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SALLY NETZEL and BEATRICE WOLF

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(ALICE IN WONDERLAND)

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the musical *must* give credit to the author and composer of the musical in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the musical and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the musical and/or a production. The name of the author and composer *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author and composer, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
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ALICE IN WONDERLAND—The Musical

Cast of Characters

Alice, a spirited, inquisitive, independent child

Helen, her romantic older sister

Little Rabbit, a puppet rabbit

Rabbit, an absent-minded, harried individual

Lory, an ancient but enthusiastic old bird

Eaglet, a suffragette bird

Duck, A Cockney bird of few words

Dodo, a ponderous, overbearing bird

Pigeon, a silly bird

Caterpillar, a pompous, unexcitable worm

Knave of Hearts, a charming but confused fellow

Cheshire Cat, a smiling linguist

Mad Hatter, an unpleasant tap dancer

March Hare, an unpleasant companion to the Hatter

Dormouse, a somnolent treacle-head

Queen, a totally inconsistent adult

King, her consort, who tries

Flowers, Cards of the Court, and other Creatures as needed

(Doubling is possible for many of the characters, including Helen/Queen and Caterpillar/King)

Δ

Synopsis:

ACT I

Scene 1—A meadow

Scene 2—The fall

Scene 3—At the bottom of the rabbit hole

Scene 4—To Wonderland and some birds

Scene 5—A mushroom

Scene 6—Meeting a Knave and a Cheshire Cat

Scene 7—A tea party

Scene 8—The forest

ACT II

Scene 1—Another part of the forest

Scene 2—A croquet ground

Scene 3—Under a tree

Scene 4—A trial

Scene 5—The meadow

(The play may be shortened by omitting episodes)

•Δ•

First presented by The Dallas Theater Center, Dallas, Texas, under the direction of Louise Mosley with the following cast:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Alice | Nancy Collins |
| Helen..... | Kaki Dowling |
| Rabbit | Jacque Thomas |
| Lory..... | Georgia Pixley |
| Duck | Lynda Sue Hart |
| Dodo | Susan Cox |
| Eaglet | Dee Zimmers |
| Mouse..... | David Gernsbacher |
| Caterpillar | Edward Herrmann |
| Knave of Hearts..... | Ryland Merkey |
| Cheshire Cat | Penny Metropulos |
| Mad Hatter..... | Mona Pursley |
| March Hare..... | Victor Fichtner |
| Dormouse..... | Zoe Conner |
| Queen..... | Judith Davis |
| King..... | Mike Dendy |
| Cards of the Court | Darlene Davison, Lynn Gaspar, Carol Hanft, Jennifer Johanos, Barbara Pope, Merrilee Shopland, Kristi Wheeler |

ABOUT THE PLAY

Is *Alice in Wonderland* a story for children, or adults? Bob Porter's Dallas *Times-Herald* review of this play said:

"Lewis Carroll, of course, is a satirist for adults. You have to let the kids in though on something as grand as 'Alice in Wonderland.' The marvelous characters of Alice's world belong to the kids, even if some of Mr. Carroll's subtleties of language and wit may be out of their grasp.

"For its traditional holiday musical spectacular . . . the Dallas Theater Center turned 'Alice in Wonderland' into a musical. It is an adaptation that pays attention to both levels of Carroll . . .

"In sticking close to the original story . . . the Center has fashioned a children's 'spectacular' of unusual intelligence."

John Neville, drama editor of the Dallas *Morning News*, reported:

"When Lewis Carroll wrote his children's classic . . . he probably had no idea that it would lend itself to a musical treatment. But, thanks to . . . Sally Netzel and Beatrice Wolf it has, and very neatly. These two talented ladies have not only adapted the story of Alice's fabulous adventures, but have composed a score that does much to supplement the Carroll prose . . .

"Here is theater that the kids can grab—it's tuneful, colorful and peopled with characters they can understand."

This musical version of the cherished story is fertile territory for directors and designers with imagination. Sally Netzel has created unlimited opportunities for imaginative costumes, props, scenery, and lighting. And Beatrice Wolf's music inspires wonderful ideas for choreographing such scenes as the Caucus Race and the royal entry of the Queen of Hearts and her court.

Alice's slow-motion fall down the rabbit hole is a challenge for any stage designer. Ms. Netzel suggests "flying" or rather dangling Alice a foot or two above the darkened stage while projections on a scrim behind her show the various scenes and articles that she passes. According to Lewis Carroll, the sides of the hole "were filled with cupboards and book-shelves: here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs."

Of course, an animal's burrow doesn't have to go straight down. An alternative to the flying apparatus is a sliding board or ramp, down which Alice might slide and tumble.

The prop most applauded by reviewers of the Dallas Theater Center premiere was the Knave's horse designed by David McManaway (see photo on page vii) "fabricated, with great ingenuity, from bits and pieces of scrap lumber and assorted odds and ends," according to Neville, who also complimented "McManaway's color projections, flashed behind Alice as she descends into the rabbit hole."

The reviewers also noted that the adults in the audience were as delighted as the children. Neville urged:

"By all means take the kids to Theater Center between now and Jan 7. They'll love it and so will you."

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Available from the Publisher:

Piano/Vocal Score

Demonstration/Accompaniment Tape. The “Demonstration” side contains vocals and music. The “Accompaniment” side contains instrumental music only for use at rehearsals, and also at public performances if desired.

PRODUCTION NOTES*Properties***ACT I**

Scene 1

Picnic basket—Alice and Helen

Large book (without pictures), cookie, deck of cards—in basket

Scene 3

Clods of earth, pieces of tree roots—thrown on or dropped from above on Rabbit

Small bottle—on table

Pocket watch—Rabbit

Scene 5

Large mushroom on wagon—pushed on and off by Caterpillar

Hookah—Caterpillar

Scene 6

Wooden horse on wheels—Knave

Tray of tarts (tarts are secured to the tray)—Knave

Scene 7

Table full of tea settings: tea pot, teacups, saucers—brought on

ACT II

Scene 2

Flamingos (for croquet mallets)—Rabbit

Hairy balls with eyes, ears, tails—Rabbit

Scene 3

Chain—holding Knave to tree

Letter—Knave

Scene 4

Slates—Jury

3 or 4 scrolls—Rabbit

Cup of tea—Hatter

Knave's letter—Alice

Costumes

The John Tenniel illustrations for Alice in Wonderland are so colorful and fanciful—and so well known—they seem the logical guide for costuming this play. However, the possibilities for imaginative costumes are endless. The photos on pages vii, viii, and 45 show some of the Dallas Theater Center's designs.

Lights, Sound, and Special Effects

Imaginative lighting can do much to enhance the wonders of Wonderland. Suggestions for light control are given in stage directions throughout the script, especially in the matter of set changes. Using pin spots to focus attention on one tiny area while the rest of the stage is blacked out enables set props to be shifted without a break in the action.

The few required sound effects are also noted in the stage directions. Additional sounds, such as cricket chirps, bird calls, and owl hoots may add suspense to Alice's "lost" scenes. Trumpet fanfares and drum rolls may effectively accompany some of the actions of the Queen.

The most interesting special effect suggested by the author are projections

of slides or movie film. As Alice is falling down the rabbit hole, the items she sees can be 35-mm. slides projected on a scrim. By slowly tilting the projector upward, the illusion will be that Alice is falling downward. The Cheshire Cat's grin may also be projected on the scenery, as suggested in the stage directions.

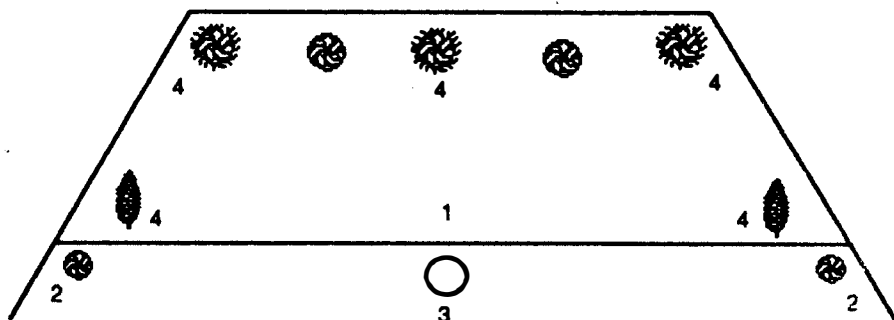
Music

A piano/vocal score of the music for this play is available from the publisher. Also available is a demonstration/accompaniment audio tape. The demonstration side of the tape presents the vocals so that prospective producers can review the songs. The "demonstration" is also helpful to actors in learning the songs. The accompaniment part of the tape provides instrumental accompaniment (without vocals) for use at rehearsals and, if desired, at performances.

The Set

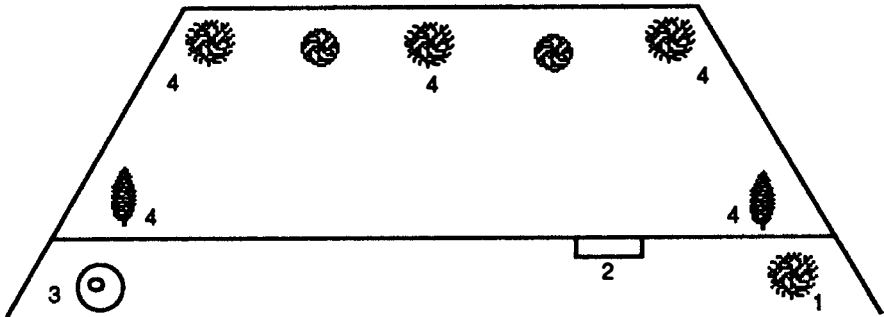
One possibility for handling the set is to have most of the Wonderland scenery permanently installed upstage behind a scrim. The downstage planes, in front of the scrim, will be used for:

Act I, Scenes 1 & 2; Act II, Scene 5



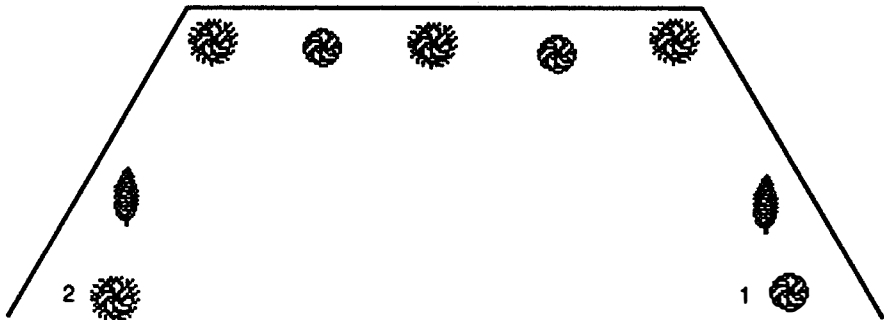
- 1—Scrim
- 2—Shrubbery and flowers (normal size) on a wagon for quick removal at the end of Scene 2
- 3—Rabbit hole—ground row around trap door; or, if no trap, tall enough so that the manipulator of the Little Rabbit puppet can be concealed. To be struck at the end of Scene 2
- 4—Wonderland scenery—shrubs, flowers, tree trunks on a very large scale—as they would appear to rabbits, birds, and other small animals

Act I, Scene 3



- 1—Shrubs, tree trunk and roots—large scale
- 2—Door (normal size), to be removed at the end of Scene 3
- 3—Table. The table perhaps should be larger than usual, yet low enough so the Rabbit can take the bottle off the top. To be removed at the end of Scene 3
- 4—Wonderland set same as above

Act I, Scene 4, through Act II, Scene 4



Wonderland

The upstage scenery remains the same as in previous scenes, but now the scrim is removed.

- 1—Additional Wonderland scenery (same as No. 1 in preceding scene). To be struck at the end of Act II, Scene 4
- 2—Additional Wonderland scenery on wagon. To be struck at the end end Act II, Scene 4

ALICE IN WONDERLAND—The Musical

Music #1: OVERTURE

ACT I

Scene 1

[A small mound in a sunny meadow in Victorian England—a tree, shrubs, flowers—and a rise or ground row concealing the LITTLE RABBIT puppet manipulator near the rabbit hole. The greenery need not be realistic, but it should be real size to contrast with Wonderland.]

AT RISE: As the Overture moves into “Who Am I,” the LITTLE RABBIT appears, hops about, wiggles an ear, disappears. Enter ALICE and HELEN with a picnic basket. They dance about each other chasing, teasing, arguing in mime about the proper location for their picnic. ALICE is a girl with the logic of a child not yet muddled by sophistication. HELEN is almost an adult and therefore inconsistent. At the end of the dance, HELEN takes a large book from the basket; ALICE, a cookie and deck of cards]

HELEN. That’s enough! I have to study. *[The dance ends. HELEN sits and begins to read. ALICE munches on a cookie, shuffles the cards]*

ALICE. What are you reading?

HELEN. Don’t talk with food in your mouth. As you can see, it’s “The Complete History of England.”

ALICE. Doesn’t it have any pictures?

HELEN. No.

ALICE. Or conversations?

HELEN. Of course not.

ALICE. Of what use is a book without pictures or conversations?

HELEN. It’s a history book. History is important.

ALICE. To who? Excuse me, to *whom*?

HELEN. To everyone.

ALICE. Why?

HELEN. Go somewhere and play.

ALICE. Every time I ask a question you can’t answer, you say, “Go somewhere and play.” Just like Mother and Father.

HELEN. You’ll understand when you’re older.

ALICE. That's another thing you always say.

HELEN. Alice, go somewhere . . .

ALICE. “. . . somewhere and play,” I know. [*ALICE moves away. Suddenly, LITTLE RABBIT runs by her, pauses, and disappears down a hole. ALICE runs back to Helen*] Helen! I just saw a rabbit! A white one!

HELEN. [*Not looking up*] There are lots of rabbits around here.

ALICE. But this one was different! He had a watch! On a chain! And he was wearing a waistcoat!

HELEN. Alice . . .

ALICE. He pulled the watch out of his little pocket and looked at it!

HELEN. You're imagining things again.

ALICE. Just because you've never seen a rabbit with a watch doesn't mean there might not be one rabbit somewhere with one!

HELEN. Stop bothering me. I have to memorize this lesson about William the Conqueror.

ALICE. But the rabbit . . .

HELEN. Stop being silly. Go somewhere . . .

ALICE. Very well, I shall. I'll go somewhere wonderful and you can't come. Stay here with your old William the Conqueror.

Music #2: TO BE TOUCHED

[As the MUSIC begins, the sisterly battle continues, part confrontation, part individual dreaming]

ALICE. [*Sings:*] I'll go some place wonderful where you cannot come,

Some place quite wonderful where there's nothing but fun.

HELEN. [*Sings:*] I dream of cavaliers and kings;

I dream of deeds of daring

And of someone caring.

ALICE. I'll look for some place where history

And teachers and study and such

Are lost in a forest of flowers and trees—

Just there to be touched.

HELEN. I have a dream of daring—to be touched!

Where is my White Knight?

Where is the right knight?

ALICE. Everyday things seem so dull and dreary;

Everyday things make me feel so weary,

So I'll go someplace wonderful where things are inside
out . . .

HELEN. I dream of him all day long . . .

ALICE. And stand on my head,
And do a somersault, and shout!

[ALICE and HELEN sing together, each in her own world and melody]

ALICE.

With no one to tell me no,
And no one nearby to reprimand.
Where there are
Things smooth or lumpy, things
Hard, rough or
Bumpy, with thin things and
Thick things and soft things and
Slick things right there
Under my hand

To be touched.

HELEN.

I know that some-
Day he'll come searching for
Me—then
Off we will
Go—
Through the mist
And the cloud
Where we're allowed
There in that world
Of our own . . .

To be touched.

[HELEN sits dreamily staring into space. ALICE sneaks up behind her]

ALICE. You're not studying!

HELEN. Oh, Alice! Really!

ALICE. You looked so moony. What were you thinking about?

HELEN. *[Picking up the book]* William the Conqueror. I have no time for foolishness.

ALICE. Well, I have. Lots of time. *[Goes apart, lies on grass, sulks]*

[Accompaniment might improvise from "To Be Touched" in a minor key to cover scene change with Alice's lines over music. LIGHTS fade down to a pin spot on ALICE. Another pin spot up on LITTLE RABBIT at a distance]

ALICE. I wish people would be foolish sometimes. That they'd believe silly things, impossible things. I wish . . . I wish I weren't so very sleepy. I wish . . . I wish . . .

[PIN SPOT on ALICE fades to black. She is hooked up to fly line, or moves to top of ramp. Stage is black for change except for pin spot on LITTLE RABBIT, whose voice is the same as that of "Big" Rabbit. ALICE's voice comes from the dark]

LITTLE RABBIT. Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy! Am I late!

ALICE. Rabbit? Mr. Rabbit?

LITTLE RABBIT. I shall be beaten, beheaded, probably embarrassed!

ALICE. Wait, Mr. Rabbit! Please wait for me!

LITTLE RABBIT. Impossible. I'm late, agitated state, no debate, mate!

ALICE. But I want to talk to you!

LITTLE RABBIT. What's that got to do with the price of lettuce? I'm late! *[LITTLE RABBIT jumps down the rabbit hole. ALICE immediately runs into the pin spot]*

ALICE. Wait, Mr. Rabbit! I want . . . I want you to meet my sister. I want to . . . Oh, where did you go? *[Leans over the hole]* My what a deep, dark hole. Rabbit? Raa . . . *[She falls into the hole]*

[BLACKOUT as Alice's "Raa . . ." cross fades from live voice to a recorded echo]

Scene 2

[During blackout, ALICE is "flown." The apparatus need be no more elaborate than simply being lifted up a few feet off the floor and dangled (or she may twist and turn on a ramp to give the impression of tumbling and falling down the rabbit hole). A steeply angled SPOT lights Alice from above. Behind her on scrim is a projection, film, or a simple hand-pulled rear projection of the walls of the rabbit hole—cupboards and bookshelves and pictures and maps on pegs—moving slowly up behind Alice. Occasionally an actual object—a rabbit jacket or a jar of marmalade—is pulled up downstage of Alice. ALICE's VOICE (recorded) echoes off the "walls" of the hole]

ALICE. What a very, very deep hole. Dear me, it certainly is a long way down. Shall it ever end? After such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling downstairs. I must have fallen miles and miles by this time. Perhaps I'm getting somewhere near the center of the earth.

Let me see—that would be about four thousand miles down, I think. I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth! [*Yawns, beginning to be bored*] My cat will miss me very much tonight, I should think. I hope someone will remember her saucer of cream at tea-time. Dinah, my dear, I wish you were with me. There are no mice in the air, I'm afraid, but you might catch a bat, and that's very like a mouse, you know. But do cats eat bats, I wonder. [*Dreamily*] Do cats eat bats? Do bats eat cats? Cats eat bats, bats eat cats . . .

[PROJECTION and ALICE's SPOT fade to black as LIGHT rises on another area, the bottom of the rabbit hole. ALICE is unhitched from flying apparatus in blackout]

Scene 3

[The bottom of the rabbit hole consists of walls of Victorian-style twisted roots, a working door, and a table with a bottle on it. At rise of LIGHTS, RABBIT is discovered pacing around in a small circle]

RABBIT. I've forgotten, I've forgotten, I've forgotten something.

ALICE. [*Voice from above*] Cats and bats, bats and cats . . .

RABBIT. What? What is that!?

ALICE. Whoops! Oh, dear! [*Clods of earth and a few roots fall from above. RABBIT crawls under the table in fear*]

RABBIT. A giant thing! I'm being invaded by a giant thing! [*There is a CRASH and a few more clods fall*]

ALICE. Well, finally.

RABBIT. What's that? Who's there?

ALICE. It's me, Alice! Please help me, I'm stuck.

RABBIT. [*Crawling out from under table*] How could a little rabbit like me help a great monster of a thing like you? Besides, I haven't time. [*Slaps cheek, almost remembering*] Time! It had something to do with time.

ALICE. What had?

RABBIT. I don't know!

ALICE. If you please, if you'll help me down, I'll try to help you remember whatever it is you've forgotten.

RABBIT. But there's not enough room for you down here, you great ox of a girl! Let me see . . . there must be something. I know!

[Takes bottle from table and throws it upwards] Here, drink this! It's guaranteed to shrink anything—animal, vegetable, and mineral.

ALICE. Thank you, but it's not poison, is it?

RABBIT. Of course not. I drink it all the time—when I have to sleep under a leaf, or hide from dogs. Once I drank too much and disappeared altogether! Most confusing.

ALICE. This tastes very good, but it makes me feel ever so odd.

RABBIT. You'll get used to it. *[A few clods tumble down, hitting RABBIT]* Watch out!

ALICE. Sorry. I think I'm small enough now.

RABBIT. Just be careful. *[ALICE jumps down into the light, now appearing to be the size of Rabbit]* Oh, ho! I know you! You're Alice!

ALICE. I said I was.

RABBIT. You followed me here. What do you want?

ALICE. I just wanted to know where you were going, and why you seemed to be in such a hurry, and where you got that watch . . .

RABBIT. Going . . . hurry . . . watch! That's it! I'm late!

ALICE. Late for what, if you please?

RABBIT. I don't please! I'm off!

ALICE. *[Grabbing Rabbit's paw]* You're not very polite. After all, I did help you remember, and I am a guest in your house.

RABBIT. Uninvited! Uninvited! Let go!

ALICE. There's no reason to be rude.

RABBIT. Rude! You can see that I'm in a great nervous hurry, and yet you continue to talk, talk, talk. It shall not be allowed!

Music #3: A MUDDLED FUDDLE

RABBIT. *[Sings:]* This unobliging botheration clearly has to stop.

I can't condone these foolish questions; I will surely pop!

My scatterbrain is rattle-brained, a shatter-pated wreck,

A rattle-headed cocklebrain, all above my neck!

ALICE. *[Spoken]* You mean your head?

RABBIT. *[Spoken]* That's what I said! Now, where in whoosis was I? Oh, yes . . . *[Sings:]*

I can't remember anything, like what comes after "X,"

Or what we all are doing here, and where we're going next!

I can't remember names of things; I'm addled as can be,

So don't confuse and don't abuse poor muddled, fuddled me.

[Spoken] Do you realize I have to wear a hat to remember where my head is?

ALICE. You don't!

RABBIT. I do! I do! *[Sings:]*

This absent-minded feather-brain; I fear there's something loose,

Distracted, dizzy, giddy-brained, as giddy as a goose.

My head shall burst unless I bring this boiling to a simmer.

I'm in a sea of troubles and I'm such an awful swimmer.

[Spoken] Do you realize that I looked in my mirror this morning . . .

ALICE. And?

RABBIT. The face was familiar, but I couldn't recall the name.

[Sings:] Oh, I'm disordered, discomposed, and disarrayed, at sea;

It's undefined oblivion and blind obscurity.

I'm all a-swim in cloudy limbo, sinking fast and yet,

If I move fast I may remember what I can't forget.

ALICE. *[Spoken]* That's a terrible problem! What is the answer?

RABBIT. What was the question?

ALICE. Don't you remember?

RABBIT. I tell you . . . *[Sings:]*

I can't remember anything, like what comes after "X,"

Or what we all are doing here, and where we're going next.

I can't remember names of things; I'm addled as can be—

So don't confuse and don't abuse poor muddled, fuddled me.

ALICE. Don't fluster, bluster, flutter, clutter, flurry, worry, razzle, dazzle . . .

RABBIT. Addle, rattle, muddle, fuddle . . .

ALICE & RABBIT. Muddle-fuddled me!

[RABBIT and ALICE whirl around each other until RABBIT gives ALICE a final spin and runs out the door. ALICE circles dizzily for a few moments. When she stops and sees that Rabbit has gone, she runs to the door]

ALICE. Wait! Wait for me, Mr. Rabbit. Will I see you again? Where did you go? My, it's very dark behind this door . . . *[ALICE starts to step through the door. BLACKOUT except for PIN SPOT on Alice. At this point the set is changed to Wonderland—large and fantastically lush Victorian style foliage in easily moveable units]* Oh dear, it's gotten very dark! How very curious, and not at all pleasant. Perhaps

someone is sitting on the top of this rabbit hole, perhaps Helen . . .
[Calling upwards] Helen! Do get up! It's very dark down here, wherever "here" is. And where's the door? Did I step through it, or not? I'm afraid I'm lost. I'm afraid I'm going to cry.

[ALICE begins to sob as she feels her way around the darkness. She finally finds a soft thing, which will turn out to be the DODO, and sits on it. As she cries and talks to herself, LIGHTS rise and dim on one fantastic area at a time. The other birds—PIGEON, LORY, EAGLET, and DUCK—stare at her from their perches. As LIGHTS rise, accompaniment might improvise from "Wonderland"]

ALICE. I know I shouldn't cry. But it's all so confusing. I'm quite as confused as the Rabbit. I'm not at all sure who I am any more. I certainly feel very foolish, and not very clever. Perhaps I've turned into Mabel, who is really rather stupid. I hope not. I'll try to see if I know things I used to know . . . like the multiplication tables. Let me see: four times five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is—oh, dear! I shall never get to twenty at this rate! Perhaps geography—London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome, and Rome—no, that's all wrong! If I've turned stupid as Mabel, I shall never go home. But I surely wish someone were here to keep me company . . . *[ALICE buries her head in her hands and sobs]*

Scene 4

[LIGHTS rise to full on Wonderland]

PIGEON. *[A giggling, mindless creature]* Coo, coo.

ALICE. *[Looking up]* What? What was . . . *[Sees Wonderland around her, rises]* Oh! Oh, my! Where in the world am I? How beautiful!

PIGEON. *[Swings down from its perch]* So I've been told.

ALICE. *[Startled, sits down again, this time on the Duck]* Oh, my! I thought I was alone!

LORY. *[A robust bird, swinging down to Alice]* Nonsense! You're not alone.

EAGLET. *[A bird proud to the point of stuffiness]* If you were, we wouldn't be here, would we?

ALICE. Why, you're birds! The biggest birds I've ever seen!

[DUCK, an abrupt sort, flaps up from under ALICE, sliding her to the ground]

DUCK. We h'ain't.

EAGLET. It's you what's small, not we what's big.

DUCK. Anywise, 'tis no reason to sit on a duck. And cry great salt seas all over me. Good thing I yam a duck, come t' think of it. Oi'm soppin' wet!

ALICE. I'm sorry, but I'm as wet as you . . . Why, you all can talk!

DODO. *[A big, jolly bird]* As well as you can and a great deal louder!

EAGLET. To whom do we speak?

ALICE. My name is Alice.

DUCK. Wha'cher doin' 'ere?

ALICE. Well, nothing, really.

DODO. That's just what *we* do here! Nothing at all! Alice, I'm the Dodo, and that giggler is Pigeon. And there's Duck, of course, and the Eaglet and Lory.

ALICE. *[Curtsying]* How do you . . .

LORY. *[Taking stage]* Sit down, all of you, and listen to me! *[The BIRDS gather and sit]*

DUCK. *[To Alice]* You 'eard 'im. Sit down. Not on me! *[ALICE sits]*

LORY. This will dry you off. This is the driest thing I know, memorized from a book without pictures, called "The Complete History of Wonderland."

ALICE. Wonderland! Is that what this place is called?

PIGEON. *[Terribly pleased]* Yes, indeedy!

EAGLET. Shush!

LORY. Ahem! William the Conqueror, whose cause was favored by the Pope . . .

ALICE. William the Conqueror? Did he discover Wonderland?

LORY. No, my dear. *You* discovered it.

ALICE. I?

LORY. You've never seen it before, have you?

ALICE. No.

LORY. Then you have discovered it!

PIGEON. Congratulations!

EAGLET. Hear, hear!

DUCK. Good show!

DODO. Bully!

LORY. May I proceed? Ahem . . .

EAGLET. We've forgotten the rule!

DUCK. W'at rule?

EAGLET. Never say anything you can sing!

[BIRDS line up and hum thirds to tune up, barbershop fashion]

Music #4: WONDERLAND

BIRDS. *[Sing:]* Wonderland—

Open your eyes.

Now see it and hear it and touch it—

Smell out the truth from the lies.

Now you'll see sights strange as rabbits at tea,
Hear sounds and hear words made with madness and glee,
But whatever its meaning to you or to me,
It's Wonder, Wonderland.

It's really very strange and wondrous to behold,
A merry, mad, and moony land, with stories to be told.
A wonderland enchanted, with heroes big and bold,
So wander on in Wonderland, and its glories will unfold—

It's Wonderland—

Open your eyes,

Now see it and hear it and touch it,

Smell out the truth from the lies.

Now you'll see sights strange as rabbits at tea,
Hear songs and hear words made with madness and glee,
But whatever its meaning to you or to me,
It's Wonder, Wonderland—

Wonder, Wonderland!!

PIGEON. *[Spoken]* Ooh, that was so pretty!

DUCK. W'at's next, mates?

LORY. I'll decide.

EAGLET. No, I'll decide.

DODO. My turn! My turn!

LORY. In order to decide who will decide, let's race!