



Alice's Adventures Under Ground

A musical adaptation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
by Lewis Carroll

Book/Lyrics – Barbara Hockley
Music – Greg Swinford

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ALICE'S ADVENTURES UNDER GROUND

CHARACTERS

Narrator/Singer

Alice	(Secunda in The Prologue)	EVERY SCENE
Alice's Thoughts	(Voice only)	SCENES 2, 3
Sister 1	(Prima in The Prologue)	SCENES 1 & 11
Sister 2	(Tertia in The Prologue)	SCENES 1 & 11
The Storyteller		SCENES 1 & 11
White Rabbit		SCENES 1, 2, 3, 8 & 10
Caterpillar		SCENE 4
Pigeon		SCENE 4
Fish Footman		SCENE 5
Frog Footman		SCENE 5
The Duchess		SCENE 5
Cook		SCENES 5 & 10
Cheshire Cat		SCENES 6 & 8
Mad Hatter		SCENES 7 & 10
Dormouse		SCENES 7 & 10
March Hare		SCENES 7 & 10
Two of Spades		SCENES 8
Five of Spades		SCENES 8
Seven of Spades		SCENES 8
2/3 Soldiers		SCENES 8 & 10
Queen of Hearts		SCENES 8, 9 & 10
King of Hearts		SCENES 8 & 10
Knave of Hearts		SCENES 8 & 10
Gryphon		SCENES 9 & 10
Mock Turtle		SCENE 9

Extras to play/move parts of scenery and move set around

Courtiers

Soldiers

Kings and Queens

Royal Children

Guests at the Croquet Game

ORCHESTRATION

Please note we do not supply backing tracks. The music should be played live.

We supply piano/vocal score, full score and band parts

Piano/conductor

Reed (one player: flute, clarinet, alto sax)

Violin

Keyboard (strings, staccato strings, marimba, brass)

Drumkit & percussion (one player: bass drum, snare, hihat, crash, ride, woodblock, glockenspiel, xylophone)

Bass guitar

Supporting notes on vocal ranges can be supplied and are part of the download when buying a performance copy and performing rights.

LIST OF SONGS AND INCIDENTAL MUSIC WITH REQUIRED VOCAL RANGE

No	Title	Sung	Reed	Key	Range	Narrator	Alice	A's Thoughts	Frog Footman	Duchess	Baby	Cook	Mad Hatter	March Hare	Dormouse	Soloist 1	Soloist 2	Soloist 3	Soloist 4	Mock Turtle	White Rabbit	K of Hearts	Q of Hearts	Jurors	Company
Act I	1 Prologue	Poem	Flute	C maj	N/A	Y																			
	2 Down the Rabbit Hole	Dialog	Flute	C min	N/A			Y																	
	3 Drink Me, Eat Me	Y	Flute	G maj	c'-a'			Y																	
	4 The Caterpillar	N	Flute	C min	N/A																				
	5 Knocking	Y	Alto Sax	F maj	c'-c''			Y																	
	6 After Knocking	N	Alto Sax	F maj	N/A																				
	7 Duchess's Lullaby	Y	Clarinet	Bb maj	bb-bb'				Y																
	8 The Tea Party	N	Alto Sax	D maj	N/A																				
	9 Why is a Raven Like a Writing Desk?	Y	Alto Sax	D maj	a-b'				Y																
	10 Dreamland	Y	Flute	Eb maj	bb-c'				Y																
Act II	11A EITHER The Procession	N	Clarinet	G maj	N/A																				
	11B OR The Queen's Entrance	N	Clarinet	G maj	N/A																				
	12 Croquet	Y	Alto Sax	D maj	a-b'																				
	13 Croquet Reprise	Y	Alto Sax	D maj	a-b'																				
	14 After Croquet Reprise	N	Alto Sax	D maj	N/A																				
	15 The Lobster Quadrille	Y	Clarinet	Eb maj	bb-c'																				
	16 Beautiful Soup	Y	Clarinet	Eb maj	eb'-eb''																				
	17 The Trial	N	Flute	D maj	N/A																				
	18 The Tarts	Y	Flute	D maj	a-a'																				
	19 The Letter	Y	Flute	D-E maj	a-c#''																				
20 Courtroom Chaos	N	Flute	F maj	N/A																					
21 Life is but a Dream	Poem	Flute	C maj	N/A																					
22 Curtain Call	N	Alto Sax	D maj	N/A																					

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POTENTIALLY HELPFUL NOTES

ALICE'S THOUGHTS

There are a lot of these in the book and most are 'asides' in the play. However, at the beginning there are a few moments when an amplified live voice could be used to good effect (or a recorded voice). These lines are noted as 'ALICE'S THOUGHTS'. During these moments it would be a good idea to keep all the light focussed on ALICE rather than the person speaking the 'Thoughts' (should she be on stage).

STAGING

There are a few challenges in staging ALICE'S DREAM.

One: ALICE has the unfortunate experience of changing size rather frequently. To assist you in these transformations I would suggest using projections and/or oversized/undersized scenery. If you have the actors available it would be useful (for example) to have your oversized scenery brought on by characters in keeping with the scene.

Two: There are some very physical sequences (SCENE 2, of course, involves the Rabbit Hole) and the more physical your cast the better. A few gymnasts wouldn't go amiss! You might, for example, have actors playing the sides of the rabbit hole/well and helping to turn and twist ALICE as she falls. You could also, as mentioned, use film to enhance the sequence. Equally ALICE might stay upright and the scenery moves

Three: The scenes change a lot, but none of them require a 'full set' (it is a dream after all). Any scene changes should be worked into the action, using costumed actors (see notes throughout).

Four: You need to create a very magical place. To get the full fantasy effect on stage with a budget make full use of film, puppets, 2-dimensional hand-held pieces of scenery and as much imagination and atmospheric lighting as you can muster! The moments in-between scenes where changes need to happen are ripe for music (incidental music supplied), effects and any other dream-like device that will keep the magical dreamy quality of the performance going.

THE MUSIC

A live band is required for the show and having the musicians and vocalist/s onstage would be an interesting option if possible. It would help to enhance the surreal nature of the play if the band were in costume (they do not need to act) – 'playing cards' might be good, but whatever works for you. If they are positioned so that during SCENE 11 (The Court) they appear to be watching the proceedings it will help to populate the Court Room.

COSTUME

Open to interpretation, but some things are required. The WHITE RABBIT must have a waistcoat and pocket watch, the MAD HATTER has a very recognisable hat and so on.

In my ideal world the costumes most definitely have a basis in Victorian dress, in keeping with the time it was written (published 1865), but also a creative twist that delves into the realms of fantasy. However, it's your production! If it helps we can hire you Alice dresses, playing cards, a caterpillar lifesize puppet attachment and other bits and pieces. See the Offbeat Theatre website for details.

THE MATERIAL

As well as 'Alice in Wonderland' we have used three of Lewis Carroll's poems:

Part of 'All in the Golden Afternoon' – Prologue

Dreamland – after Scene 7

Life is But a Dream – end of play

ONE ACT OR TWO?

You can choose either option. If you wish to go for two acts finish Act I after 'Dreamland' following Scene 7 (this creates 2 short Acts – about 30 minutes each).

If you need to edit the script down for time I would suggest making cuts from the following:

The Pigeon sequence – page 8/9

The Dormouse's story – page 16

Possibly some of the Mock Turtle's story – page 24/25

You don't need permission to make these cuts – but please do contact us at Offbeat Theatre if you'd like help or if you need to change anything else.

SCENE 1 – Prologue

The Prologue is spoken by an onstage/offstage narrator with live band.

ALICE and her SISTERS are centre stage with the STORYTELLER.

Throughout the song they mime/dance (maybe) aspects of the lyrics.

The landscape is dreamy / hazy. It looks the way you feel when you're drifting off to unplanned sleep with heavy eyes...

Throughout the Prologue the lighting should gradually change from a hazy summer's day to a more surreal dream landscape.

ALICE does not ever 'go to sleep' during this, but slowly steps into a dream world that is complete by the time she reaches the bottom of the well.

A NOTE ABOUT MUSICAL CUES

Each one has a cue line or visual cue noted in the Piano/Vocal and Full Score.

The numbering in the script relates to these.

MUSIC CUE NUMBER 1: PROLOGUE NARRATOR

All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

*They start in a boat (mime -
although they might have oars)*

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

*The boat goes – oars are taken
They rest on the bank*

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict “to begin it”,
In gentler tones Secunda hopes
“There will be nonsense in it!”
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not more than once a minute.

*The White Rabbit silently runs across the stage
behind them, nervously looking around - exits
Only Alice notices and draws way from the others
and looks offstage towards the White Rabbit*

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast -
And half believe it true.

*As Alice leaves the company of the others
they also move backwards and exit very slowly
Alice moves back to centre stage*

Alice is alone

SCENE 2: Following The White Rabbit

MUSIC CUE NUMBER 2: DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

The WHITE RABBIT runs on nervously

WHITE RABBIT: Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!

ALICE notices the WHITE RABBIT.

The WHITE RABBIT takes out his pocket watch much to ALICE'S astonishment.

He looks alarmed and hurries off.

ALICE follows and is just in time to see the WHITE RABBIT disappear down a rabbit hole.

ALICE jumps after him and finds herself falling down a well - the sides of which can be created by actors, hand-held scenery, film or any other cunning device you can imagine.

ALICE does not speak during this fall, but we hear her THOUGHTS instead. She could make noises, or even yawn during the pauses though.

Noted in the book: On the way down she sees cupboards, bookshelves, maps and pictures. She also picks up a jar of orange marmalade, discovers it is empty and places it back on another shelf. By the time she hits the bottom ALICE is asleep and awakes in a dreamland.

ALICE'S THOUGHTS: (Spoken / recorded)

Well! After such a fall as this I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs!

How brave they'll think me at home!

Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!

I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?

I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth.

Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down,

I think .. yes, that's about the right distance ..

but then I wonder what latitude or longitude I've got to?

I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth!

How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downward!

Dinah'll miss me very much tonight, I should think!

I hope they remember her saucer of milk at teatime.

Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here 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? (*Getting sleepy*)

Do cats eat bats?

Do cats eat bats?

Do bats eat cats? (*Continues until fall ends*)

MUSIC ENDS AS ALICE HITS THE BOTTOM.

ALICE: Ow!

She gets up and is surprised to discover she is unhurt.

The WHITE RABBIT runs behind ALICE and she turns just in time to see him exit.

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

ALICE runs after the WHITE RABBIT.

ALICE: Oh, please come back.

She finds herself in a hall / room with doors (6 doors plus the tiny curtained one would be plenty).

SCENE 3: Doors

ALICE: Well! So many doors. Which one shall I try?

She begins to try the doors.

ALICE: Locked! (*tries another*) Oh dear, this one is also locked. (*Tries another one or two*) Oh my! (*Tries another*) Why, this door is locked as well.

She walks away from the doors rather sadly.

ALICE: If I cannot open a door, then how will I ever get out again?

ALICE notices a table (it wasn't there to begin with) – a three-legged glass table with a tiny key on top of it.

ALICE: A key! I wonder .. It is rather a small key, but perhaps it might belong to one of these doors.

She tries to fit it into the first door.

ALICE: Oh dear, this keyhole is far too big. *(Tries another)* And so is this one. I do believe all these doors have very large keyholes.

Then she notices a tiny curtain behind which is a tiny door about 15 inches high.

ALICE: Well! How very curious.

She tries the key and it fits.

When she looks through the door she sees a beautiful garden.

(If film is being used this would be a good way to portray the garden).

ALICE: Oh! That is just the loveliest garden I have ever seen. How I wish I could get through this door, but 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! I think I could if only I knew how to begin.

ALICE stands (the garden disappears) and walks back to table.

She finds a small bottle on the table and picks it up.

MUSIC CUE NUMBER 3: DRINK ME, EAT ME

ALICE: *(Spoken)* A bottle?

ALICE: *(Sung)* “DRINK ME” .. Drink Me?
Well, it's all very well to say “Drink Me”
But I'm not going to do that
I shall read the label first
It might be marked “POISON”
If you drink from a bottle marked “POISON”

ALICE: *(Spoken)* It is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later.

ALICE examines the bottle and satisfied it is not poison she drinks.

ALICE'S THOUGHTS: Umm, it tastes of .. cherry tart .. custard .. pineapple .. roast turkey .. toffee and .. hot buttered toast.

ALICE finishes drinking.

She starts to shrink until she is 10” high.

ALICE: What a curious feeling! I must be shutting up like a telescope. I do believe I am now the right size for going through the little door into that lovely garden.

But ALICE has forgotten the key. Unable to get through the door or climb up the now very large table, she starts to cry.

ALICE: Come, there's no use in crying like that! I advise you to leave off this minute!

ALICE notices a little glass box lying under the table. She picks it up and opens it. Inside is a cake with the words 'Eat Me' marked in currants.

ALICE: *(Sung)* "EAT ME" .. Eat me?
Well, it's all very well to say 'Eat Me'
If it makes me grow larger
I'll be able to reach the key
If it makes me grow smaller
I shall squeeze under the door

ALICE: *(Spoken)* Either way I'll get into the garden and I don't care which happens.

ALICE eats a bit and starts to grow again.

ALICE: *(Sung)* Which way? .. Which way?
Is the room getting bigger or smaller?
I think I might be growing
My feet are out of sight
Goodbye, my poor little feet
But who will dress you now?

ALICE: *(Spoken)* I'm sure I shan't be able to reach!

ALICE is now nine feet high. She takes the key and lies down by the tiny door. Being far too big to fit through the door she leaves the door, puts the key on the table and starts to cry again.

ALICE: You ought to be ashamed of yourself, to go on crying in this way! Stop this moment, I tell you!

From offstage the WHITE RABBIT is muttering and trots across the stage. He has white kid gloves and a fan.

ALICE: *(Timidly)* If you please sir ...

The WHITE RABBIT jumps at this, drops the gloves and fan and runs away as fast as he can. ALICE picks up the fan and starts fanning herself. The act of fanning makes her grow small again.

ALICE: *(Spoken)* Curiouser and curiouser!
(Sung) How queer everything is to-day!
Have I changed?
I'm not sure who I am
I think I'm growing small again
Could it be this fan?

ALICE drops the fan quickly. She is now three inches high.

ALICE: *(Spoken)* That was a narrow escape!

ALICE: *(Sung)* Eat Me! ... Drink Me!
Well, I never was this small before
The key is on the table
I can't get through the door
Things are worse then ever now
I'm so tired of being alone here

MUSIC ENDS

The WHITE RABBIT runs on again looking for his fan and gloves. He does not notice ALICE.

WHITE RABBIT: Oh! the Duchess, the Duchess! Oh! won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!

The WHITE RABBIT locates the fan and gloves, picks them up and runs off.

ALICE: Wait! Oh, please wait.

ALICE runs after the WHITE RABBIT.

SCENE 4 – Caterpillar

MUSIC CUE NUMBER 4: THE CATERPILLAR

ALICE finds herself outside surrounded by grass, flowers and a large mushroom. She stretches up on tiptoe to look over the edge and comes face to face with a CATERPILLAR, arms folded, smoking a long hookah and taking no notice of her.

After an awkward silence, the CATERPILLAR addresses ALICE in a languid, sleepy voice.

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: (*sternly*) What do you mean by that? 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; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing.

CATERPILLAR: It isn't.

ALICE: Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet, but when you have to turn into a chrysalis – you will some day you know – and then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel a bit queer, won't you?

CATERPILLAR: Not a bit.

ALICE: Well, perhaps your feelings may be different. All I know is, it would feel very queer to ME.

CATERPILLAR: (*Contemptuously*) You! Who are YOU?

ALICE: (*Gravely*) I think you ought to tell me who YOU are first.

CATERPILLAR: Why?

ALICE turns away and starts to leave.

CATERPILLAR: Come back! I've something important to say!

ALICE turns and comes back.

CATERPILLAR: Keep your temper.

ALICE: (*Trying not to be angry*) Is that all?

CATERPILLAR: No.

CATERPILLAR puffs away on hookah with arms folded without speaking for a few moments. Then he unfolds his arms and takes the hookah out of his mouth.

CATERPILLAR: 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: Can't remember things?

An awkward pause while the CATERPILLAR puffs on his hookah.

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: I DON'T know. 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: You'll get used to it in time.

CATERPILLAR starts to smoke again. ALICE waits for him to speak, but CATERPILLAR stops smoking, yawns and gets down from the mushroom and crawls away.

CATERPILLAR: (*Crawling away*) One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter.

ALICE: One side of what?

CATERPILLAR: Of the mushroom.

ALICE looks thoughtfully at the mushroom trying to make out which were the two sides as it was perfectly round. Then she stretches as far as her arms will go around the mushroom and breaks off two pieces.

ALICE: And now, which is which?

ALICE tries a piece from the right hand side and her neck grows and grows. In no time at all she has grown out the top of a tree and is completely surrounded by leaves.

ALICE: What CAN all this green stuff be? And where HAVE my shoulders got to? And oh, my poor hands, how is it I can't see you?

ALICE disturbs a pigeon sitting on her nest of eggs. The PIGEON flutters about nervously.

PIGEON: Serpent!

ALICE: I'm NOT a serpent! Let me alone.

PIGEON: As if it wasn't trouble enough hatching the eggs, but I must be on the look-out for serpents night and day! Why, I haven't had a wink of sleep these three weeks!

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

PIGEON: And just as I'd taken 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! Ugh, Serpent!

ALICE: But I'm 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: *(Doubtfully)* I .. I'm a little girl.

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

ALICE: I HAVE tasted eggs, certainly.

PIGEON: You're looking for eggs, I know THAT well enough; 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, as it happens; and if I was, I shouldn't want YOURS: I don't like them raw.

PIGEON: Well, be off, then!

Quickly she eats some from the left hand side and her neck gets smaller, disappearing back through the tree until she is nine inches high. As she walks along she comes across a house that is four feet high (A small door would suffice).

SCENE 5 – The Duchess

As ALICE looks at the house the FISH FOOTMAN comes running up to the door and knocks on it. It is answered by the FROG FOOTMAN.

FISH FOOTMAN: *(Solemnly and producing a huge letter)* For the Duchess. An invitation from the Queen to play Croquet.

FROG FOOTMAN: *(Solemnly, taking the letter)* From the Queen. An invitation for the Duchess to play croquet.

They both bow low and get caught up with each other and ALICE stifles a laugh.

Opportunity for an extended piece of slapstick!

The FISH FROGMAN leaves and the FROG FOOTMAN stays on the outside sitting on the ground. ALICE walks up to the door and knocks on it.

Every so often loud crashes and bangs can be heard from inside – as if pans and plates are being thrown around.

NOTE: *** Additional crashes and bangs are noted in the song & can be added as wished.*

MUSIC CUE NUMBER 5: KNOCKING