

SCENE 2: *Lights up on a garden setting. A large pillow that looks like a mushroom cap is UCS and covered with a blanket, hiding CATERPILLAR. The lighting is soft and warm (greens and/or reds) and TIGER LILY, ROSE, DAISY, and VIOLET stand DSR, very still. ALICE enters from DSL.*

ALICE: Here I am! Goodness, it seemed that no matter which way I tried to go, I always wound up going in the opposite. But, *(ALICE looks around with a smile.)* here I am and it is just as lovely a garden as I had hoped. *(ALICE steps to TIGER LILY.)* Oh, Tiger Lily, I wish you could talk. Wouldn't that be lovely to be able to talk with flowers? Well, I'm sure you wouldn't think it nearly as lovely as I would, being a flower yourself you are probably quite used to flower talk. Flower talk. What a silly phrase. *(ALICE sighs.)* Look at me, standing here pretending to talk to flowers.

TIGER LILY: We can talk when there's anyone worth talking to.

ALICE: *(After a pause, in a whisper.)* And can all 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 really was wondering when you'd speak! Your face has some sense in it though it's not a clever one. Still, you're the right color and that goes a long way.

TIGER LILY: I don't care about her color. If only her petals curled up a bit more, she'd be all right.

ALICE: My petals?

ROSE: The things on your head, dearie. *(ROSE turns her head to TIGER LILY.)* Poor dear, she must not be very bright.

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 back of the garden. What else is it good for?

ALICE: But what could it do if danger came?

ROSE: It could bark.

DAISY: It says "bough-wough!" That's why its branches are called boughs, you know.

ALICE: No, I didn't know.

VIOLET: You didn't? *(VIOLET and DAISY began laughing and waving their arms as ROSE covers a smile with her hand.)*

TIGER LILY: Silence! All of you! Let us be polite to our guest. *(TIGER LILY bends forward to ALICE.)* They know I'm stuck in one place and can't get at them or they would never behave so.

ALICE: It's all right. (ALICE *leans over to DAISY and VIOLET.*) If you don't hold your tongues—I'll pick you! (DAISY *and VIOLET shut their mouths quickly and look highly insulted.*)

TIGER LILY: That's right. Why, the way those two go on, it's enough to make one wilt and wither.

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

TIGER LILY: Put your hand down on the ground. Then you will know why.

ALICE: (*Patting the floor.*) It's very hard but I don't see what that has to do with it.

ROSE: In most gardens they make the beds too soft—so the flowers are always asleep.

ALICE: I never thought of that before.

DAISY: It's my opinion that you never think at all.

ALICE: Well, I . . .

VIOLET: I never saw anyone who looked stupider.

TIGER LILY: Hold your tongue! As if you ever saw anybody! You keep your head under the leaves and snore away as if you were just a bud.

ROSE: I'm sorry, dear. (ROSE *turns to VIOLET.*) And it's "more stupid," not "stupider."

ALICE: It's all right. They are just flowers.

ROSE: (*Gasping.*) J . . . j . . . just flowers?

ALICE: Oh, no, that's not . . .

TIGER LILY: It's no use. It's been said.

ALICE: I . . . well . . . is there anyone else in the garden?

ROSE: There's the caterpillar.

TIGER LILY: (*Turning angrily to ROSE.*) Shhhhhh!

ALICE: Caterpillar?

TIGER LILY: (*To ROSE.*) Now you've done it.

ROSE: I'm sorry.

ALICE: Caterpillar?

DAISY: He's on the mushroom.

VIOLET: He doesn't like to be bothered.

ALICE: Should I say hello?

ROSE: I should advise you to walk the other way.

ALICE: Why?

VIOLET: He doesn't like to be bothered.

ALICE: Oh, well, then I won't bother him.

TIGER LILY: Yes, you will.

ALICE: No, I won't.

TIGER LILY: Yes, you will.

ALICE: No, I won't.

TIGER LILY: Yes, you will.

ALICE: No, I won't.

TIGER LILY: Yes, you will.

ALICE: *(After a pause.)* Why will I?

TIGER LILY: Because you're a little girl and that's what little girls do.

ROSE: She's right. You, my dear, are a botherer.

ALICE: Is that a word?

TIGER LILY: It's not important. Now, hurry along and say hello to the caterpillar.

DAISY: You're wasting all the good sunlight.

ALICE: Is there bad sunlight?

VIOLET: It depends on the mood the sun is in.

ALICE: Really?

TIGER LILY: The caterpillar is stirring, run along and introduce yourself now. It was lovely to meet you.

ROSE: Come again, dearie!

ALICE: Thank you! *(ALICE turns and crosses US to CATERPILLAR who sits up from under the blanket on the mushroom cap, blinks, yawns and then looks at ALICE for a long moment without speaking.)*

CATERPILLAR: Who . . . are you?

ALICE: Well, I . . .

CHESHIRE: *(Stepping onstage from SL.)* This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation and Alice understood what the flowers had been telling her about how the caterpillar did not like to be disturbed. This was frustrating enough, but to add to it, Alice suddenly realized that, no matter how tall she had been before going down the rabbit-hole, she was now the same size as the caterpillar in front of her. This revelation did nothing to make her feel more confident.

CATERPILLAR: Who . . . are . . . you?

ALICE: I . . . I . . . well, I hardly know, sir. I know who I was when I got up this morning but I think I must have changed since then.

CATERPILLAR: What do you mean by that? Explain yourself.

ALICE: I can't explain myself, because I don't believe I am myself, you see?

CATERPILLAR: I don't see.

ALICE: I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly.

CATERPILLAR: Ah. Pity.

ALICE: It's just confusing being a different size than you are used to.

CATERPILLAR: (*After a long pause.*) So, you think you've changed do you?

ALICE: Yes, sir. It all began when I came here.

CATERPILLAR: Where?

ALICE: Here.

CATERPILLAR: Where is here?

ALICE: I don't know.

CATERPILLAR: You don't know where here is?

ALICE: No, sir.

CATERPILLAR: Then how do you know where you are?

ALICE: I don't.

CATERPILLAR: Ah. (*A long pause.*) I do.

ALICE: Do you? Would you please tell me?

CATERPILLAR: Certainly.

ALICE: (*After a pause.*) Yes?

CATERPILLAR: Indeed?

ALICE: What?

CATERPILLAR: What?

ALICE: I . . . please, sir, you were going to tell me where I am.

CATERPILLAR: Of course.

ALICE: (*After a pause.*) Yes?

CATERPILLAR: (*Slowly.*) You are . . . Here.

ALICE: (*Looking around as though everything makes sense now.*) Oh!

CATERPILLAR: You see?

ALICE: Yes, thank you.

CATERPILLAR: You are most welcome.

ALICE: Excuse me, sir. What is there to do Here?

CATERPILLAR: Do? Why one may do whatever they please.

ALICE: Yes, but I'm not familiar with Here and so I don't know what there is to be done or which way to go from Here.

CATERPILLAR: (*Horried.*) You wish to leave Here now that you've only just arrived?

ALICE: No, of course not.

CATERPILLAR: But that is what you said.

ALICE: It's not what I meant.

CATERPILLAR: Then you should say what you mean.

ALICE: Yes, sir.

CATERPILLAR: Now, then, which way should you go? Hmm, well, you could go that way (*CATERPILLAR crosses his left arm over his body to point SR.*) or you could go this way (*CATERPILLAR crosses his right arm over his body to point SL.*) or you could go both ways. (*CATERPILLAR switches his arms.*)

ALICE: How would you go both ways?

CATERPILLAR: It's quite easy. Your left feet go to the left and your right feet go to the right.

ALICE: But I only have two feet altogether.

CATERPILLAR: Oh, no. That will never do. You will have to pick just one direction in that case.

ALICE: Which do you recommend?

CATERPILLAR: That depends on who you wish to meet. Humpty Dumpty is this way . . . (*CATERPILLAR crosses his right arm across his body to point SL as a horrible crash is heard offstage. A group of people runs across the stage from SR shouting frantically and waving. Trampling and picking the flowers, they all cheer and exit SL. KING OF HEARTS enters from SR.*)

KING: Did you see it?

ALICE: What?

KING: Humpty's fall! I sent for all of them! Did you meet them?

ALICE: Who?

KING: My soldiers! Four thousand two hundred and seven, that's the exact number! And twenty-three point three horses!

ALICE: Point three?

KING: (*Yelling off SL.*) To Humpty! Fly my soldiers, fly! (*KING runs off SL.*)

CATERPILLAR: (*Who has not moved or seemed to notice any of the previous exchange.*) Or you could go that way. (*CATERPILLAR crosses his left arm across his body to point SR.*) to have a tea party.

ALICE: A tea party?

CATERPILLAR: Yes, quite.

CHESHIRE: Alice thought that some tea would be just the thing after the day's happenings and so she bid farewell to the caterpillar and made off in the direction she had been . . . well, directed.

(Lights down, curtain close.)