

Act 1, Scene 3 – Queen of Hearts’ Rose Garden

[Alice is seen floating gently to the ground, landing in a decadent garden with a heart motif and a beautiful castle in the background. The set includes a couple of rose bushes, a hedge, and a table with a variety of tarts on it.]

Alice Oh no, where am I? What manner of place is this? It’s so beautiful and colourful. Not like home at all. *[The White Rabbit hops in.]* Mr Fuzzybottom, there you are!

Rabbit Oh, hi Miss Alice – I’d love to stay and chat but I am so inconceivably, irrevocably and unequivocally late!

Alice Wait! How can you leave me alone in this strange place?

Rabbit Uh... like this look: bye! *[As he hops past her, Alice gets up, chases after him, and grabs him.]*

Alice Come on Mr Fuzzybottom, you can’t abandon me like this. I’m helpless and vulnerable and I can’t even walk. *[There’s a pause as they both take in the fact that she’s on her feet.]* Oh my goodness! I’m actually walking! Not only am I walking but I’m jumping about like you. But... how can that be?

Rabbit *[sighs]* That’s because you’re in Wonderland Miss Alice. Things work differently over here. What seems impossible in your world is entirely plausible over here.

Alice But that’s wonderful!

Rabbit Well, that’s why it’s called Wonderland. But it’s far from perfect Miss Alice.

Alice Why is that Mr Fuzzybottom?

Rabbit Okay: first of all, that’s not my actual name. Over here people know me as the White Rabbit.

Alice I prefer Mr Fuzzybottom.

Rabbit Well I don’t. It’s degrading and frankly quite rabbitist.

Alice Rabbitist?

Rabbit Offensive to rabbits.

Alice Right.

Rabbit Secondly, this land is ruled by the Queen of Hearts.

Alice She sounds lovely. Oh look – tarts. *[She goes to the tarts and starts eating them.]*

Rabbit Well she’s not. She’s very, very unlovely – and she doesn’t take kindly to anyone who disobeys her.

Alice She sounds like my mother. Mmm... these are good.

Rabbit In fact, it's probably best if you avoid her altogether. If you take one false step around her like forget to bow, or sneeze too loudly, or eat a single one of her tarts... [*He realises what she's doing.*] Oh no, her tarts! What have you done?

Alice What... I was hungry.

Rabbit Quick! You've got to get out of here before she – [*A fanfare is heard.*] Too late! Quick. Let's hide! [*They hide behind the table as the Tweedles enter.*]

Dum Presenting the undisputed ruler of Wonderland. She's cruel yet fair...

Dee She's fairly cruel.

Dum She's bossy yet kind...

Dee She's kind of bossy. [**Dum** looks at **Dee**.] Sorry.

Dum Her highness; the most exalted Queen of Hearts! [*A troop of Card Soldiers marches in followed by the Queen and King of Hearts and some Animal Footmen.*]

Queen Greetings my fair subjects...

Alice [*peeking over*] She looks familiar.

Rabbit [*pulling her back*] Get back here!

Queen It's such a great pleasure for you to be in my presence and... Wait a minute... Something's missing... Where's my welcome drink? Whose job was it to get me my welcome drink? [*Everyone points at Footman 1.*]

Footman 1 I'm sorry your majesty, I completely forgot about it!

Queen How dare you forget about me? I'm the Queen of Hearts – not [*topical reference*]. Off with his head! [*Two Card Soldiers start dragging him off.*]

Footman 1 But wait... what about my wife and children?

Queen Good idea: off with their heads too.

Footman 1 No! [*He's dragged off.*]

Queen Tweedle Dum, Tweedle Dee?

Tweedles Yes your majesty.

Queen It's your turn to give me a present today. Do you have one?

Dum Of course, my Queen.

Dee We brought you this. [*She takes out a small bottle and gives it to the Queen.*]

Queen And what is this?

Dee A shrinking potion.

Dum Whoever drinks it will shrink to a teeny-tiny size.

Alice [*peeking over*] That sounds wonderful.

Rabbit [*pulling her back*] Stop doing that!

Queen And what am I supposed to do with this? This potion is even more useless than
[topical reference]. How dare you give me such a useless present?

King Calm down, my delicate dewdrop.

Queen Don't you tell me to calm down, you royal buffoon. Ugh... I think I need a jam tart
to steady my nerves. *[She moves over to the table.]* But... what's this? Someone has been
eating my tarts! Was it one of you?

All No!

Queen *[to the audience]* Hey you lot out there; did you see who ate my tarts? **[Alice and the
White Rabbit pop up from behind and indicate 'no' before popping back down.]**

Audience No.

Queen Well somebody did! Somebody had the gall, the impudence, and the downright cheek
to eat my tarts, and I shall get to the bottom of this – with or without your help! *[She hits
the table in her rage and it breaks or gets knocked over – revealing Alice and the White
Rabbit cowering behind it.]* Well, well... what have we here?

Rabbit Greetings your grace.

Queen If it isn't the White Rabbit. Weren't you supposed to meet me ten minutes ago?
Where were you?

Rabbit I'm afraid I was running late your merciful majesty.

Queen Oh you were, where you? How unfortunate for you. Off with his head! **[Two Card
Soldiers approach the White Rabbit.]**

Alice No, please! You can't do that to Mr Fuzzybottom! It wasn't his fault that he was late.
He was helping me. *[The Queen looks at her and gasps.]*

Queen What is your name, child?

Alice Alice... *[The Queen walks up to her and looks intently at her frock.]*

Queen What do I see here, young Alice? *[Before she can answer, the Queen pokes her chest
and studies her finger.]* Crumbs! And not just any crumbs – oh no... *[She puts her finger
in her mouth.]* These crumbs came from my jam tarts! You are the tart thief!

All *[gasp]*

Queen Off with her head!

Alice No, please! I'm just a poor, innocent girl and... and... and... *[She starts crying
loudly.]*

Queen Oh no... Will you stop that infernal racket?

Alice I can't help it... I'm just so frightened! *[She keeps crying and goes to embrace the
Queen.]*

Queen Ew, ew, she's touching me. Someone get her off me. [*The White Rabbit pulls her off.*] Guards, off with their heads – and start with the girl cause she's really starting to bug me. [*Alice suddenly stops crying.*]

Alice Look what I found! [*She holds up the small bottle and turns to the White Rabbit.*] Quick, if we drink it, we can shrink and run away.

Queen You thief! First my tarts and now my potion. Off with her head! [*The Card Soldiers start chasing Alice and the White Rabbit.*]

Rabbit But you can't drink that Miss Alice. You don't know if it's safe. What if it's dangerous?

Alice Good point. Here: you have some. [*She grabs the White Rabbit's head and forces some potion down his throat.*]

Rabbit What? No – glug-glug... Oh no! What's going on? [*There is a transformation as the White Rabbit shrinks and disappears.*] What is happening to meee!

Alice It worked!

Queen Quickly! Get her before she escapes! [*Alice ducks between the arms of a few Card Soldiers as they chase after her.*]

Alice So long – thanks for the food and hospitality! [*She drinks the potion and there's another transformation as she shrinks and disappears.*]

Queen Come back here! Ooh, she is so going to pay for this. I will be sending my most trusted servant out to capture her.

Dum Me?

Dee No, me!

Queen Neither of you, you halfwits. For this task I need someone brave and bold and positively ruthless.

King You don't mean...

Queen I do. Summon the Jack of Hearts! [*Jack steps out from behind a rose bush to a heroic sound.*]

Jack There's no need to summon me, my Queen. I was here all along – in the rose bush.

Queen Oh Jack, you master of disguise! I want you to –

Jack No need to tell me either. I saw it all happen and I know what must be done. I will find that girl for you as well as that treacherous rabbit.

Queen I know I can always count on you Jack. [*A whistling sound is heard and everyone looks up.*] What is that noise?

King Something is falling from the sky – and it's heading straight for us!