

Alice In Neverland

A Theater for Young Audiences play by Maggie Lou Rader

Music and lyrics by James Allen

SYNOPSIS:

Alice in Neverland is a literary mashup, crime caper mystery for audiences of all ages. Join Alice, the best detective in Wonderland, who takes the case when Tinkerbell and Peter's Shadow hire her to solve the mystery of Peter Pan's disappearance. Upon arriving in Neverland, Alice finds that without Peter, time has been thrust forward, leaving Neverland in perpetual winter. The Lost Kids are growing up (and running off to invest in stock market) and the mermaids lament about being stuck in winter (left to steal crab-shmere blankets from fish). Will Alice find Peter before he grows up? Will time be restored in Neverland? Will Captain Hook ever be picked for the hockey team? This mashup of everyone's favorite childhood stories will have your audiences laughing, cheering, and using critical thinking skills to help Alice decipher clues and crack the case.

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ALICE

Welcome to Wonderland, where the tea is hot, nonsense reigns, and six impossible things can happen before breakfast. I'm Alice. You may have heard of me, falling through the rabbit hole, dancing with the dodos and such. Now most of what you've heard is true and I won't spin you no tales. But a lot has changed since you read about little 'ole Alice and her looking glass. I've matured. I've wised. I'm thirteen now. You see, I've grown up and I don't mean by eating the wrong side of a biscuit. I run the most successful and thorough detective agency in Wonderland. Have you heard of Miss Marple? Sherlock Holmes? FOOLS! You want to know who ate the oysters, slayed the Jabberwock, or painted the roses red? You call me.

It all started on a day like any other. 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe. What I mean was, I was having tea with my rabbit friend, you know, the one terrified of being late, (*WHITE RABBIT enters and takes a seat with a cup of tea*) but then again, we live in a land where nonsense reigns so not many keep to a strict schedule, well, other than tea-time.

ALICE takes her seat with the WHITE RABBIT

WHITE RABBIT

And then he asked, "Why is a raven like a writing desk?" And I said-

ALICE

They both stand on legs!

WHITE RABBIT

Well-

ALICE

Poe wrote on both!

WHITE RABBIT

Actually-

ALICE

Neither is made of cheese!

WHITE RABBIT

Do you mind? ... Well now I've forgotten.

ALICE

Another unsolved mystery for the ages.

WHITE RABBIT yawns

ALICE

You seem a bit fatigued today, worn out, you know, tired.

WHITE RABBIT

Oh! Ha! That's because I stayed up too late last night. I was fretting about a scheduled date I had this morning. Speaking of which... (*Looks at his watch*) Oh! What day of the month is it?

ALICE

The fourth.

WHITE RABBIT

Two days wrong! I told him the butter wouldn't suit the works; I don't care if it *is* the best butter! Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late! (*Exits looking at his watch*)

ALICE

Curiouser and curiouser.

WHITE RABBIT

(*Coming back to get her teacup*) Sorry, that's part of a set.

ALICE

(*She moves downstage to address the audience*) The White Rabbit frequently up and hopped off for fear of being late.

WHITE RABBIT (*offstage*)

Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!

ALICE

It was in that moment when an unexpected face, er, visitor, well, visitors came flying into my life.

'Tink' type sounds begin offstage. Then then see a light flit around the backdrop from behind, until it makes its way onstage to join ALICE, manned by PETER'S SHADOW

ALICE

It was that flitty fairy figure they call Tinkerbell, Tink for short. Her reputation had spread far and wide as a maker of mischief and faithful friend to that Pan fellow, Peter Pan from the land of Never. With her was a figure you could barely see, unless you looked with your best eyes. He was no brighter than a shadow, in fact, he was a shadow, the shadow of that daring Peter Pan.

TINKERBELL tinks, "Peter's gone missing!," and PETER'S SHADOW gestures in affirmation.

ALICE

Wow, wow, slow down Tink. Now tell me again, what's happened?

TINKERBELL tinks, "Peter. Has. Been. Kidnapped!" PETER'S SHADOW gestures in affirmation.

ALICE

You can't be serious, Peter's been kidnapped? Not *the* Peter Pan!

TINKERBELL tinks, "What did I just say? Can you help or not?" PETER'S SHADOW gestures in question.

ALICE

Well, I can try to help you find-

TINKERBELL tinks, "Aren't you the world famous detective?!?" PETER'S SHADOW gestures incredulously.

ALICE

Yes I AM the world famous detective, but I-

TINKERBELL tinks, "Don't you want to help him?!" PETER'S SHADOW gestures in question.

ALICE

Yes of course I want to help, it's just-

*TINKERBELL tinks, "Then get your sorry *** to Neverland and help us!" PETER'S SHADOW gestures in anger.*

ALICE

Watch your language little miss tinkety-tink-tink!

TINKERBELL invades ALICE's space and gets right on her nose forcing her to lean back. Tinkerbell tinks, "We need you. You've got to help us or I'll pop you in the nose!" PETER'S SHADOW restrains the angry fairy.

ALICE

Alright, alright! You drive a hard bargain; how could I say no?

TINKERBELL flies around her head thanking her over and over. ALICE moves downstage to talk to the audience. TINKERBELL exits and PETER'S SHADOW begins to change the set to Neverland.

ALICE

After her temper was tuckered, Tinkerbell explained the Lost Kids woke up that morning with no sign of Peter anywhere. No one knew who was behind Peter's disappearance, but one thing was for sure, Neverland was on its head. Without Peter, time in Neverland had begun to move forward at a very rapid

speed, making the lost children grow older, the seasons change, and everyone late to lunch. With time marching on, it wouldn't be long before the Boy-Who-Wouldn't-Grow-Up would be filing taxes and eating lemon flavored desserts like a common adult. Off to Neverland!

Adventure music is heard as we see ALICE take a bite of the cookie and fly back to Neverland with TINK. The music shifts to a more light, Neverland tune as we see PETER'S SHADOW come set the stage for the tree house.

ALICE

After eating a bite of an incredible shrinking biscuit I got from a wise-cracking doorknob a while back, I hitched a ride with that fiery Tink and Peter's Shadow back to Neverland. As far as I knew, no one from Wonderland had ever been to Neverland, or vice versa, until today. I'd read about Neverland in story books; it was a magical place, lush, green, full of mythical creatures, mermaids, and tick tocking crocodiles chasing pompous pirates, feared in all the Seven Seas. It was a beautiful place; however, when I arrived, I sensed that I wasn't alone; that I was somehow being watched... I had no idea where to begin, so I thought I'd have a chat with the last people to have seen Peter Pan before he was napped, kid style. I fought my way through the Neverforest to the Hangman's Tree, to the Lost Kids Hideout, the Home Under the Ground to talk to those tykes who just wouldn't grow up, the Lost Kids.

ALICE goes backstage while the LOST KID comes on stage. He's obviously in pain.

LOST KID

AHHH! Where did the other Lost Kids go?!?! Oh THERE you are! (*LOST KID goes to the audience and picks 3 kids to be LOST KIDS with him*) OWWW!!! EEEH! OOOOH! We're growing, it's hurting! OOOOH!!! This MUST- be- the--- EEEND!!!

LOST KID flops on the ground, seemingly dead. ALICE enters

ALICE

Oh mome raths, it's worse than I thought! (*She kneels by the body*) Stick with me kid, you're going to be okay! Kid? KID! Oh no, he's.. He's...

LOST KID screams, ALICE screams, LOST KID screams

ALICE

AAAGH! You're alive? Holy Jubjub bird! I thought you were a goner!

LOST KID

EEE!! No way! We're not worm food yet but- OOH! But we might as well be- EEEE!

ALICE

Whaddya talking about? You're all just darn kids! You've got your whole lives in front of you.

LOST KID

Yeah, we're kids now- OOOH! But not for long. Wait, you're Alice, that means Tinkerbell made it, and found you, and brought you here so you can find Peter! OH THAT'S SO GOOD. (*Pain*) OH THAT'S SO BAD.

ALICE

I've had warmer welcomes in my day...

LOST KID

No! I mean, normally we'd tie you to a tree and make you eat worms or something fun like that. Wouldn't we lost kids? YEAH! EEEHH!!! But we need you and we're not really feeling up to it, are we? Nooo..... See? They feel just as terrible as me!

ALICE

What's wrong with all of you; are you sick?

LOST KID

Kinda. See, we all pinkie swore we'd never, never, NEVER grow up, but now we seem to find ourselves in a hurry to do just that- OOOWWW! Since Peter was taken and time got all fast, now, all I want to do is... is.... OPEN A SAVINGS ACCOUNT! EEEWWWW!

ALICE

Well that's quite responsible of you.

LOST KID

Yeah, responsible, very mature, very... grown up! UUGHGH!

ALICE

Being a grown up isn't so bad!

LOST KID

SHUT YOUR OLD MOLDY FLAP TRAP! We need to find Peter and I all want to do is shop around for interest rates, buy chapstick in bulk, or, shower and actually wash my neck!

ALICE

OKAY! Okay, I'm going to find him, but I need to ask you some questions.

LOST KID

Alright, I'll try to think and focus, (*suddenly very adult-y*) I love to focus. Focusing is my favorite. (*slips out of adult and back into painful kid*) Oh no, it's starting to take over!

Lost kid now slips in and out of pain filled kid and mature adult.

ALICE

KID! Stay with me. Do you know why someone would kidnap Peter?

LOST KID

No idea. All Peter does is make sure we stay young forever, make mischief, and keep Neverland fun for everyone!

ALICE

Tell me what's the last thing you remember before Peter went missing. Begin at the beginning, and go on till you come to the end: then stop.

LOST KID

Well, last night, we all felled asleep real late-

ALICE

When?

LOST KID

Uhh... Midnight? It was after a pillow fight and cheese ball eating contest. I won. I'm the best; my personal best is 93 in a minute!

ALICE

Focus...

LOST KID

Right. After I fell asleep, you know that place between sleep and awake, that place where you still remember dreaming? I thought I dreamt someone came in and took Peter Pan. When I woke up-

ALICE

When?

LOST KID

Around 6 am? Peter's bed was empty and he was REALLY gone! Bed... Bed! Hey! I've got a great idea. Let's brush our teeth and go to bed at a reasonable hour!

ALICE

Before you do that, tell me, what you remember about that night. Did you hear someone? Smell anything, see anything? Anything at all?

LOST KID

Not a thing, they were in the shadows and absolutely silent. Oh wait! There was something! They made a sound

ALICE

A sound? What kind of sound?

LOST KID

A sound I've heard, many times before... A loud "tick-tock, tick-tock," with every step.

ALICE

A "Tick Tock" sound, eh? Now there's only one creature in Neverland I know of that makes a tick tock sound with every step. Do you know who I'm thinking about? *(Let kids answer)* That's right! The tick-tocking crocodile that ate Hook's hand!

LOST KID

I hope he washed his hand before he ate it? Help me.

ALICE

But wait a second, something doesn't make sense...

LOST KID

Speaking of no sense, I got a subscription to Better Homes and Gardens, and let me tell you, the things they do with ferns! You lost kids make a run for it, save yourselves! Everyone give them a big hand! Owwww!!!

LOST KID leaves stage in pain

ALICE moves downstage and noir music plays under ALICE's speech

ALICE

Something smells fishy, so let's take a step back and think critically. Tick Tock the Crocodile *does* tick and tock everywhere he goes, but we're underground, and last I checked, a crocodile *does not* climb a rope ladder very efficiently. Maybe he was working with an accomplice... Either way, I needed to find that croc for a chat and see where he was between the hours of midnight and 6am. I know, I'll ask the mermaids! If he went back to the water, they would have seen it all. I've got to chat with a fish.... A Person... *(confidently)* A fish person!

Music begins to play as we see PETER'S SHADOW comes onstage and sets up Marooner's Rock. He gets two student volunteers to hold a blue piece of fabric against the rock as water. He has them wave the water while he grabs the MERMAID, who is quite bundled up. ALICE enters

ALICE

Usually the mermaids swim away from humans faster than a cat in a caucus race, everyone but Peter Pan, that is, but luck must have been on my side that day.

MERMAID

*I spend my days wandering
Throughout the great blue sea
Wondering and pondering
How wonderful life can be*

*I float among the waves
And I wave to all the fish
A mermaid's life is perfect, save
For just one fungus-sized wish*

*I wish it weren't so cold!
My fin's completely frozen!
The water is so cold
No, don't even dip your toes in!*

*It's really freaking freezing!
I always have the chills!
I'm always [sneezes]
And it's coming out my gills!*

*I wish I had a sweater,
Or blubber, like the whales
Frankly, anything is better
Than these blasted, useless scales!*

*But alas, I can't deny--
As the goddess of the sea—
There are bigger fish to fry
Than poor, old, frozen me.*

ALICE

Today, I hope to hook the attention of one mercreature. (*realizes her joke*) Hooked, you get it? You fish with hooks?

MERMAID screams, ALICE screams, MERMAID screams

MERMAID

AAAAAHHHH!!! FISH HOOKS!?!

ALICE

Poor choice of words, forgive me. I'm Alice, I'm investigating Peter Pan's kidnapping miss... miss...

MERMAID

My name is Ms. BRRRIIIINNNNNNNGGGGUUUUURRRRRRIIIIPPPPPY (*Think Dory's whale language*) But you can call me Marge. (*Shivering*) Brrr....

ALICE

Marge, the Mermaid, a pleasure to make your acquaintance. (*ALICE bows*) I have reason to believe you may have information that could lead to Peter Pan's safe homecoming. Is it alright if I ask you a few questions?

MERMAID

Sure! Anything to f-f-find P-P-Peter.

ALICE

Ms... BRRR... BRRRIIII.... Marge, I'm sorry to deviate from the subject, but, are you feeling alright? I've noticed you seem a bit-

MERMAID

C-C-COLD?!?!?

ALICE

That's it.

MERMAID

That's b-b-b-because I am! I'm freeeeezing faster than a fish stick in February! Since Peter went missing and time has thrust forward, we're s-s-stuck in w-w-w-winter! Do you know how hard it is to be a m-m-mermaid in w-w-w-winter?

ALICE

I'm guessing pretty hard-

MERMAID

You bet your sweet anchovy it is! I had to tackle two carps and a really angry crab to get this last seaweed blanket! It's Crab-shmere.

ALICE

I'm very sorry for the inconvenience and I want to help. But first I must ask, do you know if a crocodile could climb up and down a rope ladder unassisted?

MERMAID

A rope ladder? What does that have to do with the price of kelp in Calcutta?

ALICE

Nevermind. More importantly, have you seen Tick-Tock the Croc since last night?

MERMAID

No I haven't s-s-s-seen him. W-w-w-why are you looking for *him*? Tick Tock doesn't have anything against Peter Pan.

ALICE

Last night, between the hours of midnight and 6am, one of the Lost Kids heard a tick tock sound when Peter was kidnapped. If you haven't seen Tick Tock, do you know where he might be?

MERMAID

N-n-n-not n-n-necessarily, but if you find Hook, you find him!

ALICE

Brilliant! Tick Tock is always chasing after the dastardly devil, Hook, whose hand he's got a crazy craving for!

MERMAID

S-s-s-sure l-l-l-lady. Just p-p-p-please find Peter and bring back s-s-s-s-summer!

MERMAID jumps into the water and goes backstage.

ALICE

That would explain everything! It was Captain Hook who committed the crime and the Lost Kids only heard Tick Tock sound because the crocodile was lurking nearby! Plus, Hook is the only creature in Neverland with the motive or a reason to hurt Peter! (*Ominous music starts to play*) I was close; I knew it! But... I couldn't shake that feeling that I was somehow being watched, tracked! Observed... I could feel it in my toes, but when I looked around, there was no one to be seen. No time to worry about that, I needed to find that dastardly Hook!

Suddenly, something pulls ALICE underneath the water as music gets more intense. ALICE goes backstage. PETER'S SHADOW has the kids stand and hold the water up. ALICE 'swims' back onstage, it looks like she's underwater. During this monologue, PETER'S SHADOW has fish swim on and off stage to investigate ALICE. We hear underwater sounds during the next speech.

ALICE (V.O.)

Now I was sure of it. Someone was after me. Trying to get me to push up daisies, kick the bucket, swim with the fishes, (*eye roll*) so to speak. The tide had pulled me away from Mermaid Lagoon and into open water, far away from the safety of the shore! I could have panicked, (*she starts to panic*) but I didn't. (*composes herself*) I realized if someone was trying to throw me off the scent, I must be on the right track. Curiouser and curiouser! I had to be close, but, in this moment, I was a fish out of water, except I'm not and I wasn't. I had to find a way out of this pickle and in a hurry. Then, it hit me!

A large fishing hook is thrown over the backdrop and hits ALICE in the head. ALICE has a 'light bulb' moment. She grabs a passing fish, throws it on the hook, pulls, and is pulled up above the surface of the water... she goes backstage. Fun pirate-y music plays and we hear a 'Tick-tock' sound. HOOK enters with TICK-TOCK.