

POOL OF TEARS

By Rachel Rubin Ladutke

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CHARACTERS:

POOL OF TEARS is set in Wonderland at any time and place.

ALICE: a young girl of varying sizes

NOT-ALICE: who is not Alice

HERMAN: a mouse

ROGER: an elegantly dressed white rabbit

RUNNING TIME: approximately ten minutes

POOL OF TEARS was written in the Playwrights Lab at The Looking Glass Theatre in New York, NY for The Alice Project, an evening of ten-minute plays based on the Lewis Carroll classics Alice in Wonderland and Through The Looking Glass. It premiered at The Looking Glass Theatre on May 7 & 8, 200

TIME: No particular time.

COSTUMING

The mouse and rabbit costumes can be as elaborate as desired, or the desired effect can be accomplished with face paint.

PROPS

A piece of cake for both ALICE and NOT-ALICE. A cookie for NOT-ALICE.

SETTING: Wonderland.

AT RISE: ALICE sits very still, staring out.

ALICE: *(Sadly, wiping her eyes:)* If I only knew who I am. Or where I am. *(SHE thinks)* I know! If I don't like who I am. I'll stay down here! It'll be no use their putting their heads down and saying "Come up again, dear!" I shall only look up and say, "Who am I, then? Tell me that first, and then, if I like being that person, I'll come up: if not, I'll stay down here 'til I'm somebody else"-but, oh, dear! I do wish they *would* put their heads down! I am so *very* tired of being all alone here!

(SHE takes a bite out of a cake, and absently sticks it back into her pocket. HERMAN, a mouse, enters and looks at her curiously. After a moment's thought, HE comes toward her offering his paw. No response.)

HERMAN: Good day. **(pause)** I said, good day!

ALICE: Oh! Hullo.

HERMAN: What are you doing?

ALICE: Nothing really.

HERMAN: That sounds like fun. I think I'll join you.

(HE sits beside her and stares out, too.)

ALICE: Do you mind?

HERMAN: Not at all.

ALICE: I meant, I'd rather be alone. I'm trying to change.

HERMAN: Change? But whatever for?

ALICE: I don't feel like myself today.

HERMAN: But you look like yourself...don't you?

ALICE: Looks don't mean anything. Haven't you learned that by now?

HERMAN: You needn't be rude.

ALICE: But what do you want?

HERMAN: **(a snap decision)** I want to change, too! I'm Herman. I'm a mouse. What's your name?

ALICE: Alice. At least it was. But now, I'm not Alice.

NOT-ALICE: **(from offstage)** You liar!

ALICE: I beg your pardon?

NOT-ALICE: **(entering)** You heard me. You're not Not-Alice. I'm Not-Alice. I wish I was Alice.

ALICE: That's wrong! "I wish I were Alice."

NOT-ALICE: But you are Alice! And I'm Not-Alice! And I want to be.

ALICE: No, I meant your grammar... **(stopping short)** You want to be what?

NOT-ALICE: I want to be Alice.

ALICE: But you're Not-Alice.

NOT-ALICE: Precisely. Who are you going to be next?

ALICE: What does it matter to you?

NOT-ALICE: Simple! If it's not Alice, maybe I can be Alice.

HERMAN: I think I'm beginning to get the hang of this.

ALICE: Well, I'm not. I don't really understand. But if you must stay, ask me again in a few minutes.

HERMAN: Oh, very well.

NOT-ALICE: Who are you to give us orders?

ALICE: Why, I'm Alice.

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NOT-ALICE: So you admit it!

ALICE: Of course. I never said I was not Alice.

NOT-ALICE: You did too!

ALICE: No, I said I want to be not Alice.

NOT-ALICE: Then let's trade!

ALICE: What?

NOT-ALICE: Switch places, you know.

ALICE: How can we do that? We don't look a thing alike.

NOT-ALICE: Yes, but if people on your side of the looking glass have never seen Not-Alice, then how will they know you're not Alice?

ALICE: That's nonsense.

HERMAN: No, it's brilliant! I want to change too.

ALICE: But what do you want to change for? Are you not happy being a mouse?

HERMAN: What makes you think I'm a mouse?

ALICE: You told me...

HERMAN: You think you're the only one who can change?

ALICE: Well, no, but...

NOT-ALICE: She thinks she's smarter. All those who come from the other side of the looking glass have a su...a su...

(ROGER, a white rabbit, enters. HE is elegantly dressed.)

ROGER: Superiority complex.

NOT-ALICE: That's it!

ALICE: I haven't though! I don't feel superior about anything. How can I? I don't even know how I got here to begin with.

NOT-ALICE: You wished it, of course.

ALICE: My wishes never come true.

NOT-ALICE: Yes, but this one did. Because you wanted to be not Alice, and I wanted to be Alice, at the same time. Now we can do it! Don't you see, this is where you belong?

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