

A.L.I.C.E

Advanced Life's Infinitely Consequential
Epistemologist.

by

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Arizona Performing Arts Theatre
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*Characters: Alice, Man , Woman , Stage Manager
Man and Woman have reserved seats and are seated in
the audience prior to curtain.*

*Alice has to be the first short of the evening. The
audience is virtually settled. There is no mention
of the play in the program . (flyers with credits
are on the table for intermission). House lights
are on. An altercation between Alice and a Front of
House volunteer as they come up the side aisle.*

ALICE

(Off stage)

Don't be such an idiot. It's a wheelchair. You've
seen one before haven't you? I am not entirely
functional. If you get out of the way, I can get on
with what I have to do. Excuse me sir, would you mind
pushing me? This woman doesn't understand what she is
doing. Thank you. That's it. I need to be on the
stage.

VOLUNTEER

Excuse me but you haven't got a ticket.

ALICE

I don't need one. I am here for an important reason.

VOLUNTEER

But I'm not allowed to let anyone....

ALICE

Break the rules?

VOLUNTEER

I can't. I don't...

ALICE

You have to. Your survival may depend on it. Who owns
this theatre?

VOLUNTEER

Carol MacLeod is our President...

ALICE

Tell her Alice is here. She'll understand. Please sir... help me up onto the stage. Thank you. You can sit down now. Could we have some lights please? We need full lighting on the stage. Lights!

(Lights come up)

Thank you. Could I have everyone's attention please? My name is Alice and I have an important message. Um...well...I am sorry to have to tell you and please do not be shocked but you are all... dead, technically speaking. I know that sounds strange and it's difficult to understand because you all feel... alive. But it's true, you're actually dead. You sir, would you please sit down.

MAN 1

Excuse me Madam... I think you're interrupting a performance.

ALICE

Yes.

MAN

We're here for the plays. Are you all right?

ALICE

No. I'm not. Your name's Peter isn't it? Peter Smythe.

MAN

Yes.. But how would you know that? I've never seen you before.

ALICE

Because I have the script. You see.

She brandishes a script

MAN

Script?

ALICE

It's all written down here. You are Peter and you are dead.

MAN

But... that's not possible. Look, I don't know who you are but I came here to watch The Summer Shorts and to see a friend. He's the stage manager in fact.

ALICE

And you're going out to dinner together afterwards. Right?

MAN

Yes...hopefully.

ALICE

You think you're in love with him. His name is...

MAN

He doesn't know. How dare you! This is so embarrassing.

ALICE

Like I told you it is all in my script.

MAN

But telling him and going to dinner - it hasn't happened.

ALICE

Of course it has. Everything has already happened. And you young man are technically dead.

MAN

That's ridiculous. How can I be dead? I'm speaking. I'm here. You must be one those political extremists. Could someone take this woman, Alice I think you said, off the stage so we can get on with the plays? She's obviously mentally ill. Maybe we should call 911. She may need an ambulance.

ALICE

I am here to help... to explain.

MAN

Sir... you brought this lady in. Would you help me take her out?

WOMAN

Excuse me... look.... I don't like to interrupt but I would like to hear what she has to say. I'm intrigued. How can we all be dead?

ALICE

Judy. Thank God.

WOMAN

How do you know my name?

ALICE

You're Judy aren't you?

WOMAN

Yes but...

ALICE

It says it here in the script. Judy interrupts.

WOMAN

Come on. He's right. This doesn't make sense.

MAN

She knew my name too and I've never seen her before.

ALICE

Let me explain and then you can ask any questions you might have. Sit down please. I don't have a lot of time and theoretically I am not supposed to be telling you this. I'm one of the last.

WOMAN

Last who? Last what?

ALICE

Last of the Alices, the Bios. We're the last to be programmed for biological functions. We can still breathe... well sort of... but the walking's not turned out so well.

WOMAN

I have no idea what you are talking about.

ALICE

You've never had any children right? And you're not married?

WOMAN

I don't think that's any of your business.

ALICE

But your genome sequence is important. It says it here. You've heard of DNA... right? What year is it? 2017. You must have heard of DNA. Everyone has their own sequence. It makes us different. The DNA alters all the time as it ages and changes. We pass it on to our children. It's time sensitive. The children you have in your twenties won't be the same as those you have in your forties.

WOMAN

I am not planning to have any... at any time.

ALICE

Yes you are. Now to explain in more detail. There are these little changes. It's what makes a Shakespeare, a Newton, a Dostoyevsky, a Margot Fonteyn. It's what makes each of us unique. Sometimes the change is minor, other times it affects everything, everybody.

MAN

But what has this got to do with us all being "technically" dead.

ALICE

They have to be sure nothing... none of these changes are missed.... we have to keep going back over the past so that none of these aberrations are missed. It's programmed that way. We have to keep checking.

In case there's a mistake. It could be a good mistake. If we are to be whole. If we are to survive.

MAN

I didn't come here for a biology class.

WOMAN

So you're from the future?

ALICE

No. We're all in the present. You've been recreated as a neuro chemical electrical reaction. It was the only way for humanity to survive. Our biology is wonderful but a joke. We fall apart. We only last on average eighty years. That's nothing. Creating Artificial Intelligence was our only way of surviving our eventual demise or transcending the limits of our human form and... to escape. Earth disappeared a long time ago. We're somewhere in Alpha Centauri now. you've been made to feel alive.

WOMAN

I'm lost.

MAN

I told you. This woman is crazy.

ALICE

Let me try to simplify things. We're all just electro chemical impulses. That's how it all started. Transhumanism allowed us to escape our biology but we could not stay static, we had to keep evolving, rediscovering ourselves. Our biological function can be restored in the right conditions.

MAN

So, where are we now?

ALICE

Well it's not my field. I'm an epistemologist; I'm in the deep mind department studying the logic of languages and how to keep them relevant.

WOMAN

But...if we're technically dead, we must be somewhere? I don't get it.

ALICE

As I said, last time I heard it discussed we were in Alpha Centauri.

MAN

That's 4.3 light years away. I work at U. of A. on the Mars project.

ALICE

That explains things. Yes. Right. So...you two have to get together.

MAN

What?

ALICE

You and Judy.

MAN

But I'm not...

ALICE

It says it in the script. There may be serious consequences if you don't.

WOMAN

Do I get a say?

ALICE

Of course you do.

MAN

I've never heard anything so ridiculous in my life.

ALICE

Mmmmm.....

WOMAN

Thanks...

She shakes her head

MAN

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend you.

WOMAN

No, that's alright.

She starts to get upset

I had such a strange feeling about tonight. I just ..it was weird... I kind of had to come here. I don't know why.

MAN

Funny you should say that. That was exactly what I felt. It was like I was in some sort of dream. I didn't know why I had to come.

WOMAN

Exactly. I saw the email about the show and I said I have to be there. And now I just want to cry and I don't even know why.

ALICE

Deja vu.

MAN

I've been here before?

WOMAN

I don't even know why I spoke up just now. In public. I don't do that sort of thing and now I'm crying and I never cry in public. I'm so sorry.

MAN

Please don't be. There's an explanation. It's just circumstances.

WOMAN

I have to leave. I hope I haven't embarrassed you.

MAN 1

No no.... The whole thing is weird. Here. I've got some kleenex.

ALICE

Checks script

O.K.

WOMAN

What a spectacle. And now my make-up's ruined.

MAN

You look fine. You don't need makeup.

ALICE

I have to go.

MAN

Can I take you to dinner? Why did I say that?

ALICE

Because it's in the script.

WOMAN

I'm fine...

MAN 1

Please... there a nice restaurant and bar, the Salty Sow... just across the road. Would you like a drink?

WOMAN

I have to get out of this place. It feels so stuffy.

MAN

We can take my car.

WOMAN

All right. Let's go.

ALICE

I think you've forgotten something.

Enter Stage Manager

STAGE MANAGER

Excuse me...the show's supposed to be starting.....
What the...Peter!

MAN

John!

STAGE MANAGER

What?

MAN

Things have changed...

STAGE MANAGER

We're having dinner after the show, right?

MAN

Something's happened. It's hard to explain.

STAGE MANAGER

You're leaving?

MAN

Look there's ... we have to talk... I'll phone you
tomorrow.

STAGE MANAGER

But....

MAN

This is Judy.

MAN & WOMAN

We have to leave. Bye.

Exeunt

ALICE

I'm Alice.

STAGE MANAGER

What? You're not part of the show.

ALICE

I know. It's all in the script with minor changes... here and there.

STAGE MANAGER

I'm confused. How could he just walk out like that. I thought we really...

ALICE

I think it's time to get on with the show. These poor people have been waiting.

STAGE MANAGER

I really believed he and I were...

Exit

ALICE

What goes around, comes around... only slightly differently. Epistemologically it's amazing how dialectically simple the language was then. Back to work. Goodnight.

She gets out of the wheelchair and walks out of the theatre. She leaves her script.

Stage Manager returns

STAGE MANAGER

Do you want some help.... Goodness. She's gone. Oh well. You forgot your script.

Reads title page

A.L.I.C.E. Alice Advanced Life's Infinitely Consequential Epistemologist!

What the hell.....I don't know.

Wheels chair off.

Lights.