

Alice in Down-Under-Land.

A delightfully unique Australian story combining the timeless tales of Alice in Wonderland, Mary had a Little Lamb, and Waltzing Matilda. Set in the Australian bush and performed entirely by children; the story is designed to appeal to an audience of pre school and primary school age children. Music, energetic dance numbers, sing-a-longs, audience participation, comedy and suspense combine as we follow the story of Alice who has lost her pet lamb, Jumbuck.

Jumbuck has been captured by the Grumpy Swagman. While looking for Jumbuck Alice becomes lost in the Australian bush. Alice gets the children in the audience to help locate the missing lamb. However, when Digger, the swagman's dog, tries to help Alice, the swagman becomes angry and he ties her and the dog up while he goes to town for some vegetables to make a jumbuck stew.

While the swagman is away Alice and Digger try unsuccessfully, to enlist the help of some bush animals, including a zany Fruit Bat, and a very vain Lyre bird. But to no avail. When it appears all is lost, and with the Swagman's return imminent there suddenly emerges from the bush, our shy hero, Akubra. Akubra is a young aboriginal stockman and he is willing to help a damsel in distress.

Just as it seems Digger, Alice and Akubra will release jumbuck and escape, the swagman returns. As he threatens our hero and heroine, who should appear but.... The squatter and his troupers, one, two, three.

The exciting ending to this light hearted legend, proves to be as interesting as the characters who star in it. Justice is seen to prevail. Jumbuck is rescued, the swagman is punished. And every-one lives happily ever after. Well, almost everyone. A children's story of yesteryear, with a subtle message for children of today, about stranger danger.



Alice in Down-Under-Land.

By Judith Prior. © 1997.

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Cast In Order of Appearance.

The Grumpy Swagman As the Name Suggests.

Digger A Pantomime dog.

Alice A little Girl Lost.

Akubra A Young Aboriginal Stockman.

Chorus of Australian Animals, Birds and Reptiles

Cameo Roles from Chorus:-

**Jumbuck, Rabbit, Fruit Bat, Lyre Bird, Squatter,
Trouper One, Trouper Two, Trouper Three.**

* SUGGESTED MUSIC.

1. WALTZING MATILDA.
2. WILLIAM TELL OVERTURE.
3. WHERE IS MY LITTLE LAMB?
4. THE DROVERS DREAM.
5. HOME AMONG THE GUM TREES.

N.B. This script is text only. Above music is an indication only, of the type of song suitable. Extra songs and dance numbers may be added at the discretion of the director. Music is of your own choosing and copyright permission should be sought.

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Setting. The Australian bush. (*Downstage left, a billy suspended over a camp fire, a rolled swag nearby. Trees and small bushes serve as wings. Perhaps a few large stumps, boulders or logs suitable for standing or sitting on, or hiding behind.*)

MUSIC No. 1. (*Up tempo rendition of Waltzing Matilda.*)

(*The curtain opens on the chorus dressed as Australian animals, birds and reptiles, dancing and singing.*)

SWAGMAN. (*Entering, stage left, at end of opening number.*) Shoo! Go on, get out of here, you nasty, noisy animals. Go on, hop it! (*Chases the animals off stage.*) I don't know what the world's comin' to... A man can't get a wink of sleep in the bush no more, what with all this dancin' and singin' and carryin' on! (*Moves to camp fire.*) Where's that dog of mine? Here, Digger! Here boy, come on good dog.... Digger, where are you? Get here, at once, you useless mutt!

(*Enter Digger, stage left, he runs to swagman and tries to hug and lick him. Swagman pushes dog away.*)

DIGGER. Woof! Woof!

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SWAGMAN. Get down, get off me! For goodness sake, behave yourself. Down, boy, down. Heel boy, heel! (*Digger bites swagman on heel.*) No, Digger. Bad dog! Stop that! Sit! Sit, Digger. (*Digger lies down and rolls over lies with feet in the air.*) Stupid dog! I don't know why I bother with you, I don't even like dogs! In fact I hate dogs! I hate dogs, nearly as much as I hate children. (*Digger sits up and begs.*)

DIGGER. Woof! Woof! (*Suddenly looks towards stage right and growls.*) Growl. Grrrr... (*Crouches sniffs the air and points, like a gun dog.*)

SWAGMAN. What is it Digger? Is there something out there? (*Picks up stick of wood from campfire.*)

DIGGER. Growl. Grrrr...

SWAGMAN. (*Stage whisper.*) Shhh...Settle down, be quiet. It might be something to good eat. A rabbit, or a stray sheep. Are you hungry Digger? (*Digger nods, yes, and rubs his stomach, and howls.*) Shh, we don't want to frighten whatever it is away. (*Digger shakes head No!*) Right then, just lie down and keep very still. (*Swagman and Digger lie down flat on the stage near camp fire.*)

DIGGER. Growl. Grrrr...

SWAGMAN. Shh. (*Pointing off right.*) Look ! A jumbuck! It's probably thirsty, and heading for the billabong. What luck! I can smell Jumbuck stew already. We'll wait until it gets closer, and when I give the signal, you grab it by the leg,

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and I'll hit it on the head with this stick. You got that?
(*Digger sits up nods yes, and lies down again.*)

MUSIC No. 1. (*Slow and mysterious reprise of Waltzing Matilda.*)

(*Jumbuck enters slowly and cautiously, dancing nervously to music. Drinks at the Billabong, Then as Jumbuck dances nearer to the camp fire, Swagman and Digger jump up and attack. Music continues faster as action continues.*)

SWAGMAN. Now! Digger! Now! Go get him boy!
(*Jumbuck freezes momentarily in fright. Swagman grabs Jumbuck. Digger grabs Swagman by the leg, growls and hangs on.*)

DIGGER. Growl. Grrrr...

SWAGMAN. Not me you fool! The Jumbuck. (*Tries to shake Digger off his leg. Waves stick wildly.*) Let go! Let me go, you dopey dingo. Let go of my leg! (*Tries to beat Digger with stick.*)

DIGGER. Growl. Grrrr...

JUMBUCK. (*Grabs stick from Swagman and hits him on the head with it.*) Take that you nasty bushwhacking Swagman. (*Hits Swagman on the bottom.*) Stop picking on this poor little dog. You should be ashamed of your self! (*Hits Swagman again on the foot, drops stick and starts to run, stage right.*)

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MUSIC No. 2. (*Chase Music. William Tell Overture.*)
(*During chase Swagman, Digger try to catch Jumbuck. Digger trips Swagman, Jumbuck almost escapes.*)

SWAGMAN. Ouch! My foot! Oh! My head. No, you don't. Come here, you're going in my tuckerbag. (*Grabs tuckerbag from swag, chases Jumbuck about stage.*)

DIGGER. Woof! Woof! (*Digger joins in the chase, very excited, barking getting in the way.*)

SWAGMAN. Get him Digger. Grab him and hang on...(*Digger bites swagman on the seat of the pants.*) Ow! Let go! Not me stupid! The Jumbuck!

DIGGER. Woof! Woof! (*Let's go of pants.*)

SWAGMAN. Head him off! Get around the back! Go back, way back! (*Digger tries to jump on Swagman's back.*) Not my back, you stupid dog. Kill, go for the throat. (*Digger moves to front of Swagman.*) Not my throat... Let go. Get off! (*Eventually the Swagman puts bag over Jumbucks head and captures her.*)

JUMBUCK. Baa.. Help... AAlice...

SWAGMAN. Ah! Got you me little beauty! (*Music stops.*) Now, I'll just hide you over here, out of sight in the bushes, in case those sticky beak troupers happen to be passing by. (*Drags or carries bag to stage left and leaves just out of sight in wings.*)

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DIGGER. Grr. Grrr... (*Shapes up to left wing as a boxer.*)

SWAGMAN. (*Limping to right of camp fire .*) Ouch, my foot!

(*Kneels, to poke at fire.*) Never mind, lamb stew for dinner tonight! Oh! Boy, What a struggle. Oh, my head! (*Attempts to sit down.*) Ouch! My bottom! Stupid dog. (*Digger stops boxing, moves to join him, starts licking and patting in apology.*) Oh, you were a great help. Look what you did. You dumb dog. You tore a hole in my best swaggie shirt. Look! (*Pokes finger through one of many holes in shirt.*)

DIGGER. Growl. Grrrr...(Sees finger and attacks. *Music starts, Swagman and Digger roll on floor.*)

SWAGMAN. Ow, my finger! Let go! Stupid mutt, get off me! Where's that stick? I'm going to... (*Swagman chases Digger off upstage right.*)

MUSIC. 3 .. WHERE IS MY LITTLE LAMB GONE?

ALICE. (*Entering stage left.*)

OH, WHERE, OH, WHERE HAS MY LITTLE LAMB GONE

OH, WHERE, OH, WHERE CAN SHE BE ?

WITH HER EARS SO SHORT AND HER TAIL SO LONG

OH, WHERE, OH, WHERE IS SHE?

SOMEBODY OPENED THE GATE, LAST NIGHT
AND JUMBUCK JUST WANDERED AWAY
SHE'S NEVER BEEN THIS FAR FROM HOME BEFORE

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I DO HOPE THAT JUMBUCK'S OKAY

I'VE BEEN SEARCHING THE BUSH
SINCE THE BREAK OF DAY
SHOULD I TURN LEFT, OR TURN RIGHT?
I FOLLOWED HER HERE, NOW I'VE LOST MY WAY
AND JUMBUCK IS NOWHERE IN SIGHT.

OH, WHERE, OH, WHERE HAS MY LITTLE LAMB
GONE, OH, WHERE, OH, WHERE CAN SHE BE ?
WITH HER EARS SO SHORT AND HER TAIL SO LONG
OH, WHERE, OH, WHERE IS SHE?

ALICE. Oh, dear, I don't think I'll ever find Jumbuck. And I'm so tired. I've been looking everywhere..

(*Enter Digger*)

ALICE. Well, Hello! (*Music stops, Alice offers hand. Digger jumps up and shakes hands hugs Alice.*) Are you lost too? (*Digger shakes his head, "No," You're not lost? Where did you come from? My, you are a friendly dog aren't you?*)

DIGGER. Woof! Woof! (*Nods, yes.*)

SWAGMAN. (*Entering. Gruffly.*) No he's isn't. He's a guard dog! And he hates people, especially children. So do I. (*Beckons Digger.*) Get here Digger. Sit boy. Sit down! Sit! I said! (*Digger moves slowly up stage, behind Swagman, and sits cross legged.*) On guard Digger!

DIGGER. (*Unenthusiastically.*) Growl. Grrrr...

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SWAGMAN. There, you see how savage he is. One word from me and he does as he likes. (*Digger waves to Alice, blows her a kiss behind Swagman's back. Alice waves back, Swagman turns to look and Digger assumes guard dog position.*)