



Alice's adventures in Wonderland

One sunny afternoon Alice was dozing on the riverbank beside her sister when suddenly a white rabbit with a waistcoat and pocket watch ran by, muttering, "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late." Then he popped down a large rabbit hole under a hedge. "How curious," thought Alice. So she followed him, falling down, down, down, past many cupboards and bookshelves into a long low hall. Unlocking a tiny little door with a golden key, Alice spied the loveliest garden you ever saw. But she was much too big to squeeze through. On a table was a glass bottle with a label saying 'DRINK ME'. So Alice did. And she shrank to only ten inches tall. Now she could fit through the door but, poor Alice, she had left the key on the table!

Under the table was a glass box and inside a cake on which it said 'EAT ME'. So Alice did and started to open out like a telescope, growing taller than ever. She began to cry great salty tears, making a pool on the floor. Just then the White Rabbit trotted past, all of a fluster, and dropped his fan and gloves. Alice shrank again, splashing right into a pool of her own tears. There she met many strange birds and animals and they all swam to shore.

A Dodo suggested that they should dry off with a Caucus Race, which has no rules except to run in circles, and everyone is a winner. The Rabbit returned and angrily ordered Alice to fetch new gloves and a fan from his house. There she found another bottle and drank her arm stuck out of the window and her leg up the chimney. Luckily, a shower of pebbles rattled through the window and turned into little cakes. Alice swallowed one and shrank once more.



Alice wandered along until she met a large blue caterpillar sitting on a mushroom. "Who are you?" he asked. But after so many size changes Alice hardly knew. Then Alice came to a house where a Duchess was nursing a baby and a Cook was stirring a cauldron of peppery soup. There a grinning Cheshire-Cat told her to go one way to find the Hatter and the other for the March Hare. Then he vanished, until nothing was left but his grin.

Alice decided to visit the Hare and found the Hatter there too, at a mad tea party with a sleepy dormouse. They were telling riddles and talking nonsense: "It's always six o'clock now." Declaring it "the stupidest tea party I ever was at", Alice walked away and came upon three playing-card gardeners painting white roses red for the Queen of Hearts. The Queen invited Alice to play croquet. But the mallets were flamingos and the balls hedgehogs and anyone who played badly was arrested.

The Queen summoned everyone to the court of justice for a trial. The Knave of Hearts was accused of stealing the Queen's witness box. But the trial was so topsy-turvy that she exclaimed, "This is stuff and nonsense." "Off with her head," screamed the Queen. "You're nothing but a pack of cards," cried Alice, when suddenly the whole pack rose into the air and flew at her. She gave a little scream as she beat them off, then found herself back on the riverbank.

"Oh," said Alice. "I've had such a curious dream."

Through the looking glass

One snowy winter afternoon whilst playing with her kittens, Alice climbed through a looking-glass into a topsy-turvy world with walking talking chess pieces and a garden of talking flowers. Seen from the top of a hill, the country beyond was divided into squares by green hedges and tiny brooks, just like a giant chess board. Running faster and faster with the Red Queen, whilst never moving off the spot, Alice discovered she was a pawn for the White Queen and would herself become a queen at the eighth square.

Alice began her journey across the "board" on a train of odd passengers which jumped over a brook and left her sitting in a cool and shady wood where she discovered a Rocking-horse-fly, a Snap-dragon-fly with a plum-pudding body and a Bread-and butter-fly. She rambled on and came upon two contrary fat boys, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, a sleeping Red King and an old broken rattle which caused the twins to argue though they stopped short of a battle.

At this moment the White Queen ran wildly into the wood and took Alice across a second brook and then just as suddenly she turned into a sheep knitting in an armchair. Alice found herself in a queer little shop full of curious things and as the sheep passed Alice a pair of knitting needles they turned into oars in her hands.

She rowed, most puzzled, along between the riverbanks but they too vanished, and she was back in the dark shop. Alice decided to buy an egg but it was Humpty Dumpty, sitting on top of a high wall and as she walked away she heard a heavy crash. The next moment the White King's horses and men came running. A messenger, Haigha (pronounces to rhyme with mayor), shouted that The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting for the crown and Alice hurried to see. They began to share a plum cake with a second messenger, Hatta, but deafening drums began to play and Alice leapt onwards across another brook.

A Red Knight tried to take Alice prisoner but she was rescued by a White Knight and hurried through the last wood, down the last hill, and over the last brook into the eighth square, where a golden crown appeared upon her head. Before her an arched doorway, with the words Queen Alice inscribed above it, led into a large hall full of curious guests. Alice sat down at the head of the table between the red and white queens. The banquet guests were conversing with their dinner and all sorts of strange things happened in a single moment.

Alice, a little frightened, seized the tablecloth with both hands and pulled everything crashing down in a heap. And catching hold of the Red Queen, who has shrunk to the size of a doll, Alice found herself back home holding a kitten after all.



end 