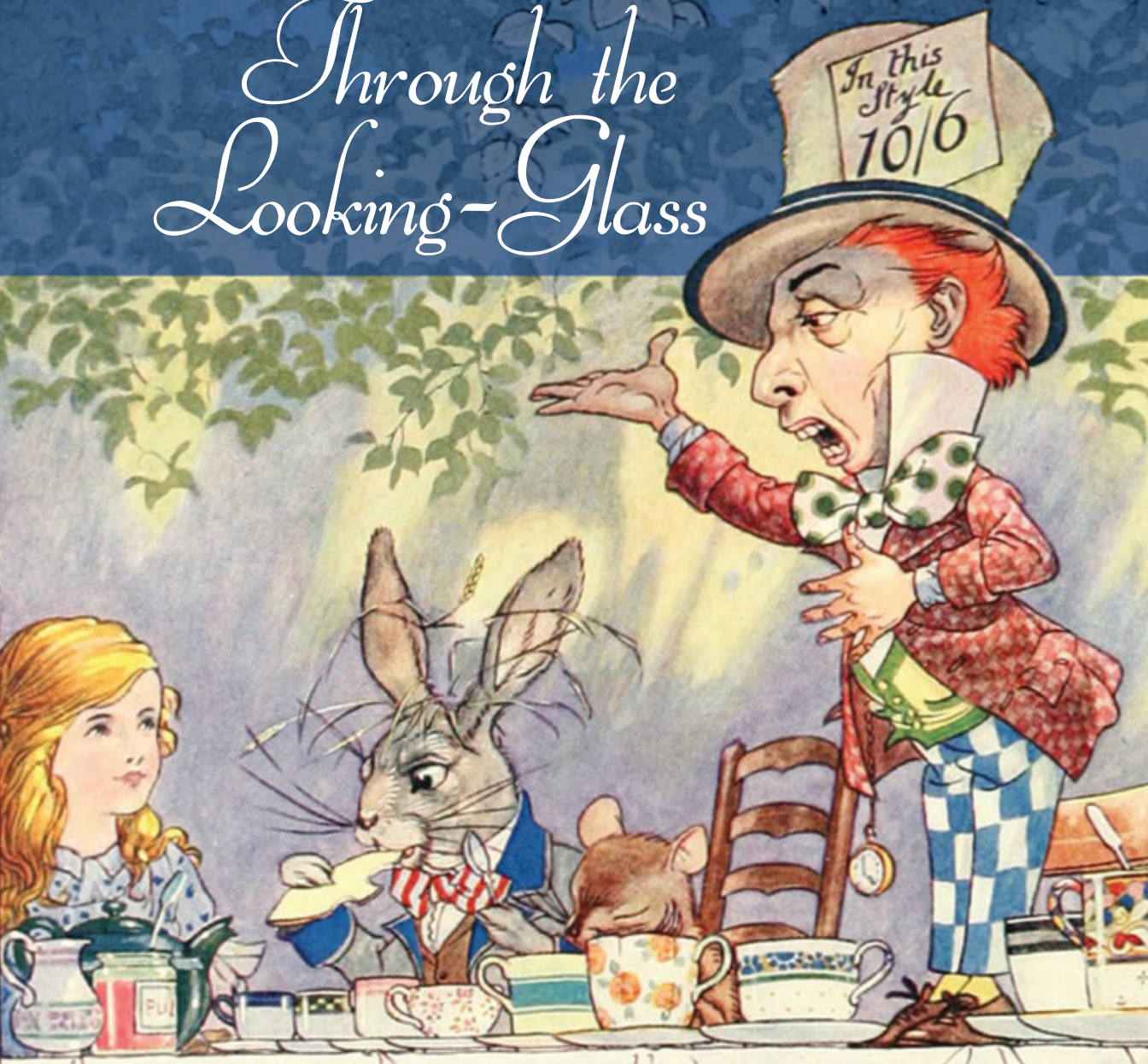
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass



LEWIS CARROLL

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass

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Includes illustrations by John Tenniel and
an introduction by Michael G. Eatmon

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PRESS

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Introduction

The Wonder, Logic, and Mirrored Worlds of Lewis Carroll

You open a book that begins with a little girl yawning on a riverbank. Would you then expect to meet a talking rabbit in a waistcoat or a cat that grins until nothing is left but its smile? That's exactly how *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* begins. It's part of why it captures readers over 150 years later. Lewis Carroll's stories about Alice are famous for their dreamlike nonsense.

Beneath the whimsy lies something orderly and thoughtful. Carroll was a man of logic and Christian faith, and he believed that reason and imagination could live side by side. That belief shaped both *Alice in Wonderland* and its sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass.* To read these books with care is to travel through two worlds at once: one of pure fancy, one of clear thought.

A Man of Faith and Figures

Lewis Carroll was the pen name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, an Englishman born in 1832. He grew up in a large, lively family in the countryside of northern England. His father was an Anglican clergyman who loved theology, mathematics, and wordplay. Their home was full of books, laughter, and faith. From an early age, Charles showed the same blend of curiosity and discipline that marked the rest of his life. He built little wooden marionettes, wrote mock newspapers for his siblings, and designed games that mixed humor with logic.

Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

Years later, Dodgson studied mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford, where in time he became a lecturer. His students sometimes found him shy, but they quickly noticed his bright, quick mind. He was a careful teacher who loved precision, yet he also had an impish sense of fun. He could quote Euclid one moment and invent a pun the next. His notebooks were filled with algebraic formulas beside comic sketches and jokes about grammar. The same mind that solved problems in logic also delighted in bending words into new shapes.

Dodgson's Christian faith stayed with him throughout his life. Although ordained as a deacon in the Church of England, he never became a priest like his father. Still, he took the church's call to moral imagination seriously. He gave generously to the poor, taught Sunday school, and wrote poems that mixed humor with quiet devotion. To him, reason and faith weren't rivals; they were partners, two ways of searching for truth. His stories reflect that partnership. They're full of wonder, but they also ask honest questions about meaning and identity. Beneath their riddles and rhymes, Carroll's tales carry a sense that the world, though puzzling, is full of pattern and purpose.

Falling into Wonderland

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, first published in 1865, began as a simple story told on a sunny afternoon. Dodgson often took walks or boat rides with the three young daughters of his Oxford dean. During one such outing, he spun a tale about a girl named Alice who followed a white rabbit into a hole and tumbled into a land of nonsense. The real Alice, Alice Liddell, begged him to write it down. He did, expanding it into the book we now know.

The story opens with boredom and curiosity. Alice, sitting by her sister, wonders what good a book is "without pictures or conversations." Then, spotting the rabbit, she dives, without thinking, into the unknown. That act of carefree curiosity sets everything in motion. Down she falls, past cupboards, maps, and jars of marmalade, into a world that looks like a dream turned inside out.

In *Wonderland,* logic behaves like a mischievous child. The rules of

size and time twist and tangle. Cakes and bottles change Alice's height. Animals talk, argue, and sing. Lessons she once learned at school, like multiplication tables or moral poems, return as riddles that no longer make sense. When she tries to recite, her words tumble into absurdity: "How doth the little crocodile / Improve his shining tail." Everything familiar has become strange.

Carroll's nonsense has a purpose. He uses it to show how fragile and flexible our thinking can be. The creatures Alice meets—the Caterpillar, who demands "Who are you?" and the Cheshire Cat, who grins at nothing—push her to question herself. In a world where words shift and meanings slide, Alice must decide what to believe. She learns, little by little, that sense can hide inside nonsense, and that confidence grows from curiosity.

Carroll's training in logic shows up everywhere. The Mad Hatter's riddles, the Queen's courtroom, and even the Caterpillar's cool questions are all little exercises in reasoning. When Alice argues with them, she practices the art of thinking clearly under pressure. Carroll never lets the logic lessons feel heavy, however. They come wrapped in laughter, rhyme, and surprise. In *Wonderland,* learning is play, and play is learning.

A World of Reversals

Six years later, Carroll sent Alice on another adventure, this time not down a hole but through a mirror. *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* begins on a snowy day, with Alice playing chess by the fire. When she steps through the glass, she finds a world that works backward. Time moves strangely, words mean their opposites, and every step forward seems to go in circles. If *Wonderland* was a dream of chaos, *Looking-Glass* is a dream of order, but order that obeys its own peculiar logic.

The whole story is built on the game of chess. Each character—kings, queens, knights, and pawns—moves according to the rules of the board. Alice herself begins as a pawn and must travel across eight squares to become a queen. This chess-game framing gives the book a tighter shape than *Wonderland.* Instead of drifting from scene to scene, Alice is on a journey with a goal, even if she doesn't always understand it.

Still, the mirror world isn't just a puzzle. It's also a meditation on growing up. The tone is cooler, the jokes sharper, the sense of wonder touched with sadness. When Alice meets the Red Queen, she must run as fast as she can just to stay in the same place. When she listens to the poem "Jabberwocky," she is delighted by the strange words but senses meanings she can't quite grasp. When she finally becomes a queen herself, the feast that follows spins out of control. The message seems clear and memorable: Mastery and confusion often travel together.

Carroll fills the book with reversals that challenge how we think. The White Queen lives backward, remembering things before they happen. The talking flowers scold Alice for her manners. Humpty Dumpty insists that words mean exactly what he wants them to mean, nothing more or less. All these oddities make *Looking-Glass* a study in perspective. Carroll asks us to see that our ordinary habits of thought are not the only way to understand the world. Sometimes, truth hides in reflection.

Two Sides of the Same Coin

Wonderland and Looking-Glass tell different stories, yet they belong together like a question and its answer. Both send Alice into fantastic worlds where reason and absurdity chase each other in circles. Both test her patience and her identity. Still, each story feels distinct, almost like morning and evening versions of the same dream.

Wonderland bursts with bright energy. It feels spontaneous, like a child's imagination running wild. Its scenes tumble one after another without clear order. The world is alive with puns, parodies, and comic misunderstandings. The humor often comes from Alice's confusion as she tries to apply ordinary logic to extraordinary events.

Looking-Glass, on the other hand, is deliberate and patterned. It moves by rule, not whim. The chessboard landscape gives every move meaning, even if Alice can't see the whole plan. The language is more polished, the rhythm quieter, and the mood more reflective. Where *Wonderland* explores curiosity and chaos, *Looking-Glass* explores discipline and design. One celebrates the freedom of imagination; the other, the beauty of structure.

Together they show two halves of human thought, the playful and the

precise. Carroll invites readers to enjoy both. His genius lies in blending them so that laughter and learning walk hand in hand. A joke about logic becomes a lesson in thinking. A dream about growing and shrinking becomes a meditation on change itself. Through Alice's eyes, we glimpse what it means to balance wonder with wisdom.

The Logic Beneath the Laughter

Carroll's sense of humor is more than whimsy. It reflects the habits of a mathematician who loved paradoxes. A paradox, after all, is a riddle that seems false but hides a truth, nonetheless. Carroll delighted in turning language inside out to show how easily words can trick us. When Humpty Dumpty claims that words mean whatever he wants, he's not just being silly. He's raising a serious question about communication. Can meaning exist without shared understanding? Carroll lets readers puzzle over it while laughing at Humpty's pompous pride.

He also uses absurdity to remind us that reason itself has limits. In both books, rules appear only to collapse, and sense turns to nonsense again. This collapse is playful, not despairing. Carroll seems to say that if the world sometimes feels illogical, maybe that's a sign to look closer, to think harder, or even to smile at our confusion. His faith may have whispered to him that mystery, not mere logic, lies at the heart of creation.

That combination—laughter and awe—makes his work endure. It trains readers to hold two ideas at once: Thinking matters, and joy does, too. The best reasoning, Carroll suggests, is done with a twinkle in the eye.

Reading Carroll Today

Why should today's students read these old tales of talking animals and impossible tea parties? One answer is simple: because they're still delightful. Carroll's language sparkles. His characters, whether the White Rabbit rushing with his watch or the Mad Hatter arguing about time, remain unforgettable. His humor is clever without being cruel. Every page invites the imagination to stretch.

There's a deeper reason, too. The *Alice* books teach habits of mind that modern life often forgets. They reward careful attention to words. They remind us that thinking clearly takes patience. When Alice puzzles through riddles or tries to make sense of absurd rules, she models intellectual courage. She doesn't give up when things get strange; she observes, questions, and learns. That spirit of curiosity is exactly what strong readers and thinkers need today.

Carroll also defends the value of play. In an age where efficiency rules everything, his stories remind us that creativity often grows out of laughter. The nonsense poems, like "Jabberwocky" or "The Walrus and the Carpenter," show how rhythm and sound can carry meaning even for invented words. Playing with language helps us understand it better. A reader who can enjoy "frabjous" and "galumphing" will never again be afraid of a big, new word.

Then, there's the stories' moral vision. Carroll's world, though whimsical, is not empty of values. Alice treats others with fairness. She argues for reason against nonsense, for kindness against vanity. Even when the creatures around her behave foolishly, she keeps her sense of justice. The stories never preach, but they quietly celebrate honesty, courage, and curiosity—virtues that any age can admire.

Finally, reading Carroll trains the imagination itself. The *Alice* books encourage readers to step outside the ordinary, to look at familiar things with new eyes. When Alice walks through the mirror, she sees her own world reversed. So can we. The books remind us that imagination is not an escape from truth but a way of viewing it from another angle.

Dreams That Keep Us Awake

When Carroll ends *Through the Looking-Glass* with the haunting question, "Which dreamed it?" he leaves readers in a gentle puzzle. Was Alice dreaming the Red King, or was the Red King dreaming her? The question has no final answer, and that's the point. Life, like Carroll's stories, mixes sense and mystery. The world can be both logical and magical, both solid and strange.

For modern readers, that mixture can feel truer than ever. We live in a

time of science and technology, yet we hunger for wonder. Carroll gives us both. He reminds us that imagination and intellect do not compete; they complete each other. To read him well is to practice seeing the world with the eyes of both a child and a scholar.

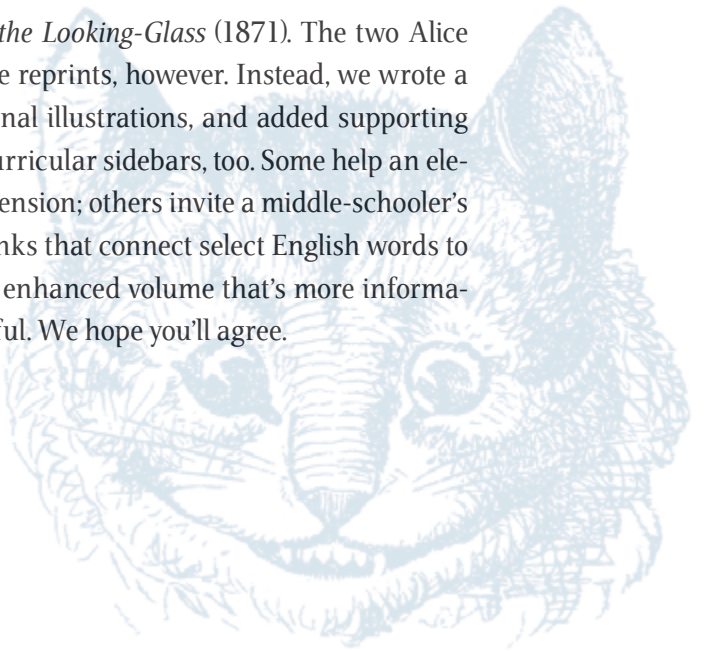
When we open *Alice in Wonderland* or *Through the Looking-Glass,* we do more than revisit a Victorian fairy tale. We step into a grand conversation about curiosity, language, and faith in meaning itself. Carroll's Christian hope flickers quietly behind all the stories' nonsense. Light shines even in confusion, and that truth, though mirrored and refracted, can still be found.

The next time you hear a White Rabbit cry, "Oh dear! I shall be late!" don't hurry past him. Follow. The rabbit hole may twist and turn, but it leads to a place where reason dances with play and laughter becomes a way of thinking. There, amid chessboards and talking flowers, we discover not only Alice's dream but our own reality.

Michael G. Eatmon

Note to the reader

The book in your hands builds on Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871). The two Alice stories in this volume are no mere reprints, however. Instead, we wrote a new introduction, refreshed original illustrations, and added supporting images. We incorporated cross-curricular sidebars, too. Some help an elementary-school reader's comprehension; others invite a middle-schooler's reflection. Further, we included links that connect select English words to their Latin roots. The result is an enhanced volume that's more informative, more engaging, more delightful. We hope you'll agree.



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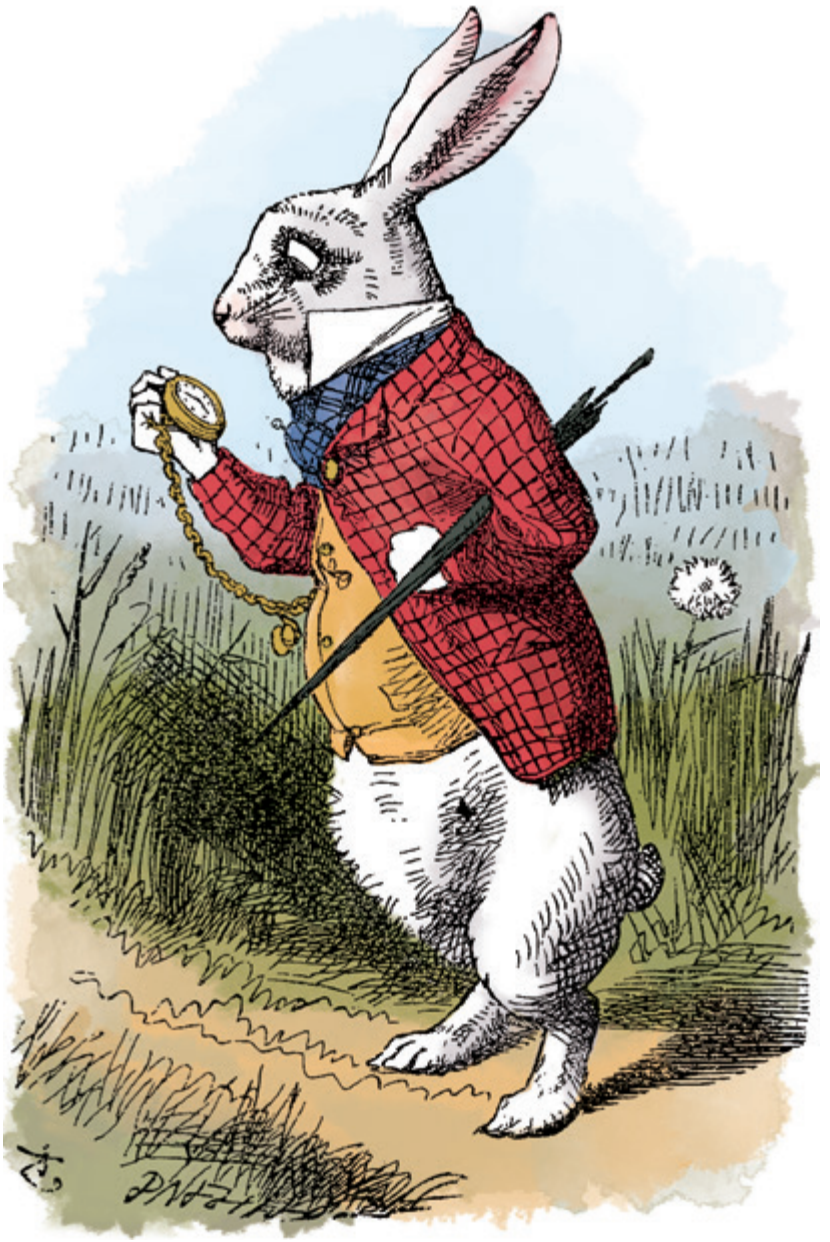

“Oh dear! Oh dear!
I shall be late!”

CHAPTER I

Down the Rabbit-Hole

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice "without pictures or conversations?"

So she was considering in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so *very* remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so *very* much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself, "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!" (when she thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but when the Rabbit actually *took a watch out of its waistcoat-pocket,* and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and fortunately was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything; then she looked at the sides

What's a waistcoat?

A waistcoat is a vest. In Victorian England, it was often part of a gentleman's three-piece suit. It typically had a special pocket for a watch. Seeing a rabbit wearing a waistcoat with a pocket watch was not just unusual. It was impossibly strange.

disappoint
LATIN ROOT(S): *dis* "not, opposite" + *appunctāre* "to bring to a point, arrange"
DEFINITION: to fail to meet hopes or wishes

of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves; here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed; it was labelled "ORANGE MARMALADE", but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar for fear of killing somebody underneath, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

"Well!" thought Alice to herself, "after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!" (Which was very likely true.)

Down, down, down. Would the fall *never* come to an end? "I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?" she said aloud. "I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think—" (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the schoolroom, and though this was not a *very* good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) "—yes, that's about the right distance—but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?" (Alice had no idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but thought they were nice grand words to say.)

Falling through the center of the earth
In Carroll's day, many scientists were fascinated by what lay at the center of the earth. He nods to this by having Alice correctly recall the distance to Earth's center, about 4,000 miles. Still, she's comically confused about concepts like latitude and longitude.

Presently she began again. "I wonder if I shall fall right *through* the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downward! The Antipathies, I think—" (she was rather glad there *was* no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) "—but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?" (and she tried to curtsey as she spoke—fancy *curtseying* as you're falling through the air! Do you think you could manage it?) "And what an ignorant little girl she'll think me for asking! No, it'll never do to ask: perhaps I shall see it written up somewhere."

Down, down, down. There was nothing else to do, so Alice soon began talking again. "Dinah'll miss me very much to-night, I should think!" (Dinah was the cat.) "I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here with me! There are no

mice in the air, I'm afraid, but you might catch a bat, and that's very like a mouse, you know. But do cats eat bats, I wonder?" And here Alice began to get rather sleepy, and went on saying to herself, in a dreamy sort of way, "Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats?" and sometimes, "Do bats eat cats?" for, you see, as she couldn't answer either question, it didn't much matter which way she put it. She felt that she was dozing off, and had just begun to dream that she was walking hand in hand with Dinah, and saying to her very earnestly, "Now, Dinah, tell me the truth: did you ever eat a bat?" when suddenly, thump! thump! down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves, and the fall was over.

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

Alice was not a bit hurt, and she jumped up on to her feet in a moment: she looked up, but it was all dark overhead; before her was another long passage, and the White Rabbit was still in sight, hurrying down it. There was not a moment to be lost: away went Alice like the wind, and was just in time to hear it say, as it turned a corner, "Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" She was close behind it when she turned the corner, but the Rabbit was no longer to be seen: she found herself in a long, low hall, which was lit up by a row of lamps hanging from the roof.

There were doors all round the hall, but they were all locked; and when Alice had been all the way down one side and up the other, trying every door, she walked sadly down the middle, wondering how she was ever to get out again.

Suddenly she came upon a little three-legged table, all made of solid glass; there was nothing on it except a tiny golden key, and Alice's first thought was that it might belong to one of the doors of the hall; but, alas! either the locks were too large, or the key was too small, but at any rate it would not open any of them. However, on the second time round, she came

upon a low curtain she had not noticed before, and behind it was a little door about fifteen inches high: she tried the little golden key in the lock, and to her great delight it fitted!

Alice opened the door and found that it led into a small passage, not much larger than a rat-hole: she knelt down and looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw. How she longed to get out of that dark hall, and wander about among those beds of bright flowers and those cool fountains, but she could not even get her head through the doorway; "and even if my head would go through," thought poor Alice, "it would be of very little use without my shoulders. Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if I only knew how to begin." For, you see, so many out-of-the-way things had happened lately, that Alice had begun to think that very few things indeed were really impossible.

"What a curious feeling!"

There seemed to be no use in waiting by the little door, so she went back to the table, half hoping she might find another key on it, or at any rate a book of rules for shutting people up like telescopes: this time she found a little bottle on it, ("which certainly was not here before," said Alice,) and round the neck of the bottle was a paper label, with the words "DRINK ME," beautifully printed on it in large letters.

It was all very well to say "Drink me," but the wise little Alice was not going to do *that* in a hurry. "No, I'll look first," she said, "and see whether it's marked '*poison*' or not"; for she had read several nice little histories about children who had got burnt, and eaten up by wild beasts and other unpleasant things, all because they *would* not remember the simple rules their friends had taught them: such as, that a red-hot poker will burn you if you hold it too long; and that if you cut your finger *very* deeply with a knife, it usually bleeds; and she had never forgotten that, if you drink much from a bottle marked "poison," it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later.

However, this bottle was *not* marked "poison," so Alice ventured to taste it, and finding it very nice, (it had, in fact, a sort of mixed flavour of cherry-tart, custard, pine-apple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast,) she very soon finished it off.

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"What a curious feeling!" said Alice; "I must be shutting up like a telescope."

curiosity
LATIN ROOT(S): *cūriōsus* "eager to know"
DEFINITION: a strong wish to know

And so it was indeed: she was now only ten inches high, and her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going through the little door into that lovely garden. First, however, she waited for a few minutes to see if she was going to shrink any further: she felt a little nervous about this; "for it might end, you know," said Alice to herself, "in my going out altogether, like a candle. I wonder what I should be like then?" And she tried to fancy what the flame of a candle is like after the candle is blown out, for she could not remember ever having seen such a thing.

After a while, finding that nothing more happened, she decided on going into the garden at once; but, alas for poor Alice! when she got to the door, she found she had forgotten the little golden key, and when she went back to the table for it, she found she could not possibly reach it: she could see it quite plainly through the glass, and she tried her best to climb up one of the legs of the table, but it was too slippery; and when she had tired herself out with trying, the poor little thing sat down and cried.

"Come, there's no use in crying like that!" said Alice to herself, rather sharply; "I advise you to leave off this minute!" She generally gave herself very good advice, (though she very seldom followed it), and sometimes she scolded herself so severely as to bring tears into her eyes; and once she remembered trying to box her own ears for having cheated herself in a game of croquet she was playing against herself, for this curious child was very fond of pretending to be two people. "But it's no use now," thought poor Alice, "to pretend to be two people! Why, there's hardly enough of me left to make *one* respectable person!"

respectable
LATIN ROOT(S): *respicere* "to look back at"
DEFINITION: thought of as proper or good

Soon her eye fell on a little glass box that was lying under the table: she opened it, and found in it a very small cake, on which the words "EAT ME" were beautifully marked in currants. "Well, I'll eat it," said Alice, "and if it makes me grow larger, I can reach the key; and if it makes me grow smaller, I can creep under the door; so either way I'll get into the garden, and I don't care which happens!"

She ate a little bit, and said anxiously to herself, "Which way? Which way?", holding her hand on the top of her head to feel which way it was growing, and she was quite surprised to find that she remained the same size: to be sure, this generally happens when one eats cake, but Alice had got so much into the way of expecting nothing but out-of-the-way things to happen, that it seemed quite dull and stupid for life to go on in the common way.

anxious
LATIN ROOT(S): *angere* "to distress, trouble"
DEFINITION: worried or uneasy

So she set to work, and very soon finished off the cake.

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CHAPTER II

The Pool of Tears

"Curiouser and curiouser!" cried Alice (she was so much surprised, that for the moment she quite forgot how to speak good English); "now I'm opening out like the largest telescope that ever was! Good-bye, feet!" (for when she looked down at her feet, they seemed to be almost out of sight, they were getting so far off). "Oh, my poor little feet, I wonder who will put on your shoes and stockings for you now, dears? I'm sure *I* shan't be able! I shall be a great deal too far off to trouble myself about you: you must manage the best way you can;—but I must be kind to them," thought Alice, "or perhaps they won't walk the way I want to go! Let me see: I'll give them a new pair of boots every Christmas."

And she went on planning to herself how she would manage it. "They must go by the carrier," she thought; "and how funny it'll seem, sending presents to one's own feet! And how odd the directions will look!

Alice's Right Foot, Esq.,
Hearthrug,
near the Fender,
(*with Alice's love*).

Oh dear, what nonsense I'm talking!"

Just then her head struck against the roof of the hall: in fact she was now more than nine feet high, and she at once took up the little golden key and hurried off to the garden door.

Poor Alice! It was as much as she could do, lying down on one side, to look through into the garden with one eye; but to get

"Curiouser and Curiouser!"

This famous phrase isn't proper English. The correct form is "more curious." Carroll's invented phrase shows how Wonderland confuses Alice. Her world has become so strange that her language becomes mixed up and childlike.

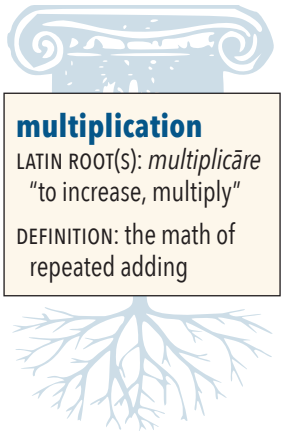
through was more hopeless than ever: she sat down and began to cry again.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," said Alice, "a great girl like you," (she might well say this), "to go on crying in this way! Stop this moment, I tell you!" But she went on all the same, shedding gallons of tears, until there was a large pool all round her, about four inches deep and reaching half down the hall.

After a time she heard a little pattering of feet in the distance, and she hastily dried her eyes to see what was coming. It was the White Rabbit returning, splendidly dressed, with a pair of white kid gloves in one hand and a large fan in the other: he came trotting along in a great hurry, muttering to himself as he came, "Oh! the Duchess, the Duchess! Oh! won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!" Alice felt so desperate that she was ready to ask help of any one; so, when the Rabbit came near her, she began, in a low, timid voice, "If you please, sir—" The Rabbit started violently, dropped the white kid gloves and the fan, and skurried away into the darkness as hard as he could go.

Alice took up the fan and gloves, and, as the hall was very hot, she kept fanning herself all the time she went on talking: "Dear, dear! How queer everything is to-day! And yesterday things went on just as usual. I wonder if I've been changed in the night? Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is, Who in the world am I? Ah, *that's* the great puzzle!" And she began thinking over all the children she knew that were of the same age as herself, to see if she could have been changed for any of them.

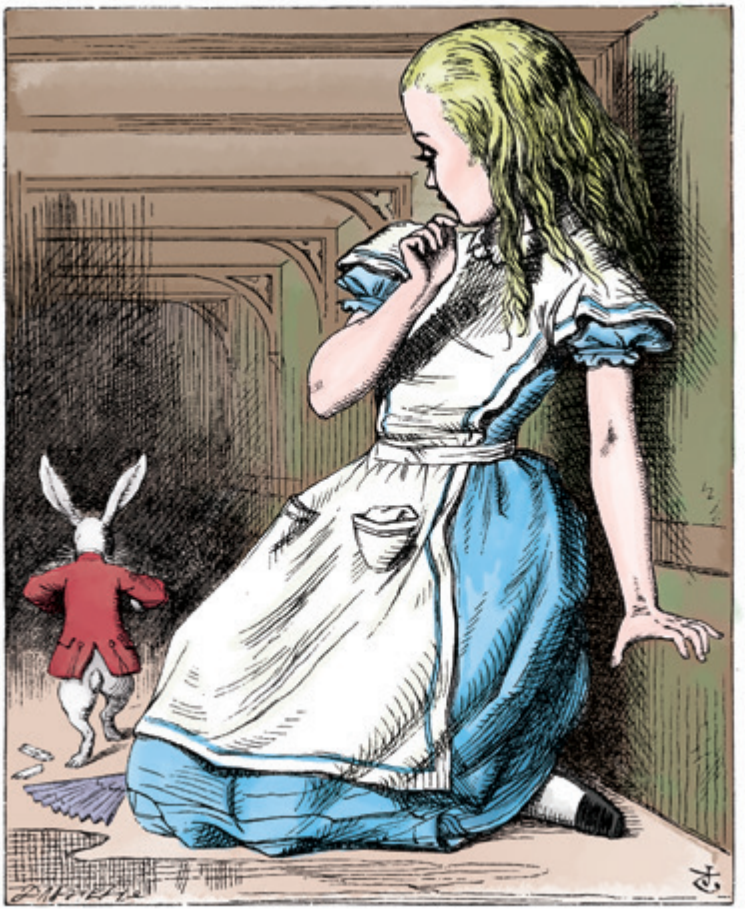
"I'm sure I'm not Ada," she said, "for her hair goes in such long ringlets, and mine doesn't go in ringlets at all; and I'm sure I can't be Mabel, for I know all sorts of things, and she, oh! she knows such a very little! Besides, *she's* she, and *I'm* I, and—oh dear, how puzzling it all is! I'll try if I know all the things I used to know. Let me see: four times five is twelve, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is—oh dear! I shall never get to twenty at that rate! However, the Multiplication Table doesn't signify: let's try Geography. London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome, and Rome—no, *that's* all wrong, I'm certain! I must have been



multiplication

LATIN ROOT(S): *multiplicāre* "to increase, multiply"

DEFINITION: the math of repeated adding



changed for Mabel! I'll try and say '*How doth the little*—'" and she crossed her hands on her lap as if she were saying lessons, and began to repeat it, but her voice sounded hoarse and strange, and the words did not come the same as they used to do:—

"How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale!

"How cheerfully he seems to grin,
How neatly spread his claws,
And welcome little fishes in
With gently smiling jaws!"

"Who in the world am I? Ah, that's the great puzzle!"

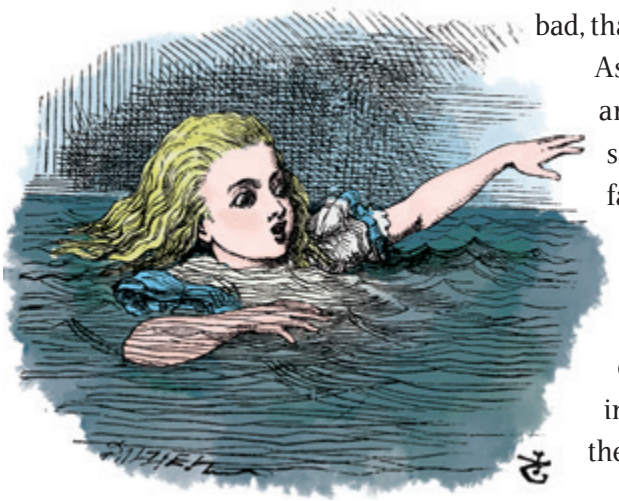
Alice's identity crisis

"Who in the world am I?" is a core question in the book. Alice's constant changes in size make her doubt her own identity. The changes prevent her from remembering simple facts, too. This confusion is a powerful metaphor for the experience of growing up. (Those reading this book may be experiencing their own sort of growing-up confusion. It may help them, as it may have helped Alice, to remember that their identity is found ultimately in Christ.)

"I'm sure those are not the right words," said poor Alice, and her eyes filled with tears again as she went on, "I must be Mabel after all, and I shall have to go and live in that poky little house, and have next to no toys to play with, and oh! ever so many lessons to learn! No, I've made up my mind about it; if I'm Mabel, 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 till I'm somebody else'—but, oh dear!" cried Alice, with a sudden burst of tears, "I do wish they *would* put their heads down! I am so *very* tired of being all alone here!"

As she said this she looked down at her hands, and was surprised to see that she had put on one of the Rabbit's little white kid gloves while she was talking. "How *can* I have done that?" she thought. "I must be growing small again." She got up and went to the table to measure herself by it, and found that, as nearly as she could guess, she was now about two feet high, and was going on shrinking rapidly: she soon found out that the cause of this was the fan she was holding, and she dropped it hastily, just in time to avoid shrinking away altogether.

"That *was* a narrow escape!" said Alice, a good deal frightened at the sudden change, but very glad to find herself still in existence; "and now for the garden!" and she ran with all speed back to the little door: but, alas! the little door was shut again, and the little golden key was lying on the glass table as before, "and things are worse than ever," thought the poor child, "for I never was so small as this before, never! And I declare it's too bad, that it is!"



As she said these words her foot slipped, and in another moment, splash! she was up to her chin in salt water. Her first idea was that she had somehow fallen into the sea, "and in that case I can go back by railway," she said to herself. (Alice had been to the seaside once in her life, and had come to the general conclusion, that wherever you go to on the English coast you find a number of bathing machines in the sea, some children digging in the sand with wooden spades, then a row of lodging

houses, and behind them a railway station.) However, she soon made out that she was in the pool of tears which she had wept when she was nine feet high.

"I wish I hadn't cried so much!" said Alice, as she swam about, trying to find her way out. "I shall be punished for it now, I suppose, by being drowned in my own tears! That *will* be a queer thing, to be sure! However, everything is queer to-day."

Just then she heard something splashing about in the pool a little way off, and she swam nearer to make out what it was: at first she thought it must be a walrus or hippopotamus, but then she remembered how small she was now, and she soon made out that it was only a mouse that had slipped in like herself.

"Would it be of any use, now," thought Alice, "to speak to this mouse? Everything is so out-of-the-way down here, that I should think very likely it can talk: at any rate, there's no harm in trying." So she began: "O Mouse, do you know the way out of this pool? I am very tired of swimming about here, O Mouse!" (Alice thought this must be the right way of speaking to a mouse: she had never done such a thing before, but she remembered having seen in her brother's Latin Grammar, "A mouse—of a mouse—to a mouse—a mouse—O mouse!") The Mouse looked at her rather inquisitively, and seemed to her to wink with one of its little eyes, but it said nothing.

"Perhaps it doesn't understand English," thought Alice; "I daresay it's a French mouse, come over with William the Conqueror." (For, with all her knowledge of history, Alice had no very clear notion how long ago anything had happened.) So she began again: "Où est ma chatte?" which was the first sentence in her French lesson-book. The Mouse gave a sudden leap out of the water, and seemed to quiver all over with fright. "Oh, I beg your pardon!" cried Alice hastily, afraid that she had hurt the poor animal's feelings. "I quite forgot you didn't like cats."

"Not like cats!" cried the Mouse, in a shrill, passionate voice. "Would *you* like cats if you were me?"

"Well, perhaps not," said Alice in a soothing tone: "don't be angry about it. And yet I wish I could show you our cat Dinah: I think you'd take a fancy

inquisitive
LATIN ROOT(S): *inquīrere* "to seek into"
DEFINITION: very curious; asking many questions

Who was William the Conqueror?

The Mouse's "dry" history lesson refers to a real person. William the Conqueror was a French duke who invaded England in 1066. His victory changed the country's language and culture, making him a key name in English history.

to cats if you could only see her. She is such a dear quiet thing," Alice went on, half to herself, as she swam lazily about in the pool, "and she sits purring so nicely by the fire, licking her paws and washing her face—and she is such a nice soft thing to nurse—and she's such a capital one for catching mice—oh, I beg your pardon!" cried Alice again, for this time the Mouse was bristling all over, and she felt certain it must be really offended. "We won't talk about her any more if you'd rather not."

"We indeed!" cried the Mouse, who was trembling down to the end of his tail. "As if *I* would talk on such a subject! Our family always *hated* cats: nasty, low, vulgar things! Don't let me hear the name again!"

"I won't indeed!" said Alice, in a great hurry to change the subject of conversation. "Are you—are you fond—of—of dogs?" The Mouse did not answer, so Alice went on eagerly: "There is such a nice little dog near our house I should like to show you! A little bright-eyed terrier, you know, with oh, such long curly brown hair! And it'll fetch things when you throw them, and it'll sit up and beg for its dinner, and all sorts of things—I can't remember half of them—and it belongs to a farmer, you know, and he says it's so useful, it's worth a hundred pounds! He says it kills all the rats and—oh dear!" cried Alice in a sorrowful tone, "I'm afraid I've offended it again!" For the Mouse was swimming away from her as hard as it could go, and making quite a commotion in the pool as it went.

So she called softly after it, "Mouse dear! Do come back again, and we won't talk about cats or dogs either, if you don't like them!" When the Mouse heard this, it turned round and swam slowly back to her: its face was quite pale (with passion, Alice thought), and it said in a low trembling voice, "Let us get to the shore, and then I'll tell you my history, and you'll understand why it is I hate cats and dogs."

It was high time to go, for the pool was getting quite crowded with the birds and animals that had fallen into it: there were a Duck and a Dodo, a Lory and an Eaglet, and several other curious creatures. Alice led the way, and the whole party swam to the shore.

CHAPTER III

A Caucus-Race and a Long Tale

They were indeed a queer-looking party that assembled on the bank—the birds with draggled feathers, the animals with their fur clinging close to them, and all dripping wet, cross, and uncomfortable.

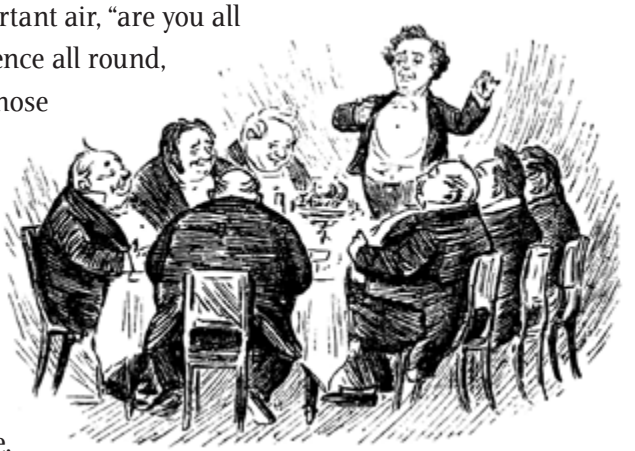
The first question of course was, how to get dry again: they had a consultation about this, and after a few minutes it seemed quite natural to Alice to find herself talking familiarly with them, as if she had known them all her life. Indeed, she had quite a long argument with the Lory, who at last turned sulky, and would only say, "I am older than you, and must know better;" and this Alice would not allow without knowing how old it was, and, as the Lory positively refused to tell its age, there was no more to be said.

At last the Mouse, who seemed to be a person of authority among them, called out, "Sit down, all of you, and listen to me! *I'll* soon make you dry enough!" They all sat down at once, in a large ring, with the Mouse in the middle. Alice kept her eyes anxiously fixed on it, for she felt sure she would catch a bad cold if she did not get dry very soon.

"Ahem!" said the Mouse with an important air, "are you all ready? This is the driest thing I know. Silence all round, if you please! 'William the Conqueror, whose cause was favoured by the pope, was soon submitted to by the English, who wanted leaders, and had been of late much accustomed to usurpation and conquest. Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumbria—'"

"Ugh!" said the Lory, with a shiver.

"I beg your pardon!" said the Mouse,

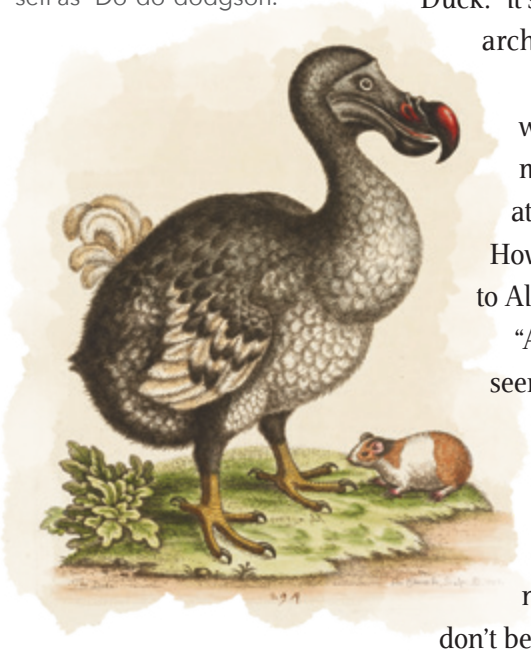


The Caucus-Race

A "caucus" is a meeting of a political party. Wonderland's Caucus-Race pokes fun at indecisive committees of whatever sort. In the race, everyone runs in circles and wins a prize. This is much like many a committee where nothing useful gets done.

What's a dodo?

The dodo was a large, flightless bird hunted to extinction in the 1600s. Some biographers believe that Carroll included the Dodo as a caricature of himself. That's because he had a stammer and would sometimes introduce himself as "Do-do-dodgson."



frowning, but very politely: "Did you speak?"

"Not I!" said the Lory hastily.

"I thought you did," said the Mouse. "—I proceed. 'Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumbria, declared for him: and even Stigand, the patriotic archbishop of Canterbury, found it advisable—'"

"Found *what*?" said the Duck.

"Found *it*," the Mouse replied rather crossly: "of course you know what 'it' means."

"I know what 'it' means well enough, when *I* find a thing," said the Duck: "it's generally a frog or a worm. The question is, what did the archbishop find?"

The Mouse did not notice this question, but hurriedly went on, "'—found it advisable to go with Edgar Atheling to meet William and offer him the crown. William's conduct at first was moderate. But the insolence of his Normans—' How are you getting on now, my dear?" it continued, turning to Alice as it spoke.

"As wet as ever," said Alice in a melancholy tone: "it doesn't seem to dry me at all."

"In that case," said the Dodo solemnly, rising to its feet, "I move that the meeting adjourn, for the immediate adoption of more energetic remedies—"

"Speak English!" said the Eaglet. "I don't know the meaning of half those long words, and, what's more, I don't believe you do either!" And the Eaglet bent down its head to hide a smile: some of the other birds tittered audibly.

"What I was going to say," said the Dodo in an offended tone, "was, that the best thing to get us dry would be a Caucus-race."

"What *is* a Caucus-race?" said Alice; not that she wanted much to know, but the Dodo had paused as if it thought that *somebody* ought to speak, and no one else seemed inclined to say anything.

"Why," said the Dodo, "the best way to explain it is to do it." (And, as you might like to try the thing yourself, some winter day, I will tell you how the Dodo managed it.)

First it marked out a race-course, in a sort of circle, ("the exact shape

doesn't matter," it said,) and then all the party were placed along the course, here and there. There was no "One, two, three, and away," but they began running when they liked, and left off when they liked, so that it was not easy to know when the race was over. However, when they had been running half an hour or so, and were quite dry again, the Dodo suddenly called out "The race is over!" and they all crowded round it, panting, and asking, "But who has won?"

usurpation
LATIN ROOT(S): *ūsūrpāre* "to seize for use"
DEFINITION: taking power without the right to do so

This question the Dodo could not answer without a great deal of thought, and it sat for a long time with one finger pressed upon its forehead (the position in which you usually see Shakespeare, in the pictures of him), while the rest waited in silence. At last the Dodo said, "*Everybody* has won, and all must have prizes."

"But who is to give the prizes?" quite a chorus of voices asked.

"Why, *she*, of course," said the Dodo, pointing to Alice with one finger;

What are comfits?

Comfits were a popular Victorian candy made by coating a nut or seed with many layers of sugar. Alice happens to have some in her pocket. The sweets end up being the perfect prizes for the nonsensical Caucus-Race.

and the whole party at once crowded round her, calling out in a confused way, "Prizes! Prizes!"

Alice had no idea what to do, and in despair she put her hand in her pocket, and pulled out a box of comfits, (luckily the salt water had not got into it), and handed them round as prizes. There was exactly one a-piece, all round.

"But she must have a prize herself, you know," said the Mouse.

"Of course," the Dodo replied very gravely. "What else have you got in your pocket?" he went on, turning to Alice.

"Only a thimble," said Alice sadly.

"Hand it over here," said the Dodo.

Then they all crowded round her once more, while the Dodo solemnly presented the thimble, saying "We beg your acceptance of this elegant thimble;" and, when it had finished this short speech, they all cheered.

Alice thought the whole thing very absurd, but they all looked so grave that she did not dare to laugh; and, as she could not think of anything to say, she simply bowed, and took the thimble, looking as solemn as she could.

The next thing was to eat the comfits: this caused some noise and confusion, as the large birds complained that they could not taste theirs, and the small ones choked and had to be patted on the back. However, it was over at last, and they sat down again in a ring, and begged the Mouse to tell them something more.

"You promised to tell me your history, you know," said Alice, "and why it is you hate—C and D," she added in a whisper, half afraid that it would be offended again.

"Mine is a long and a sad tale!" said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.

"It *is* a long tail, certainly," said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; "but why do you call it sad?" And she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking, so that her idea of the tale was something like this:—

"Fury said to
a mouse, That
he met in the
house, 'Let
us both go
to law: *I*
will prose-
cute *you*.—
Come, I'll
take no de-
nial; We
must have
a trial:
For really
this morn-
ing I've
nothing
to do.'
Said the
mouse to
the cur,
'Such a
trial, dear
sir, With
no jury
or judge,
would
be wast-
ing our
breath.'
'I'll be
judge,
I'll be
jury,'
Said
cun
-ning
old
Fury:
'I'll
try
the
whole
cause,
and
con-
demn
you to
death.'"

"Mine is a long and a sad tale!"

Ready to tumble down a rabbit hole and step through a looking glass? Lewis Carroll's timeless tales of riddles, reason, and imagination come alive again. Rich illustrations, helpful reader aids, and a new introduction invite readers to explore the man behind the magic. Discover the Christian mathematician who believed that logic and laughter could live side by side.

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