

Alice Through the Looking Glass

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Alice	Goat	Humpty Dumpty
White Queen	Beetle	Haigha
White King	Horse	Hatta
Red Queen	Gnat	Unicorn
Tiger Lily	Fawn	Lion
Rose	Tweedledee	Red Knight
Daisy	Tweedledum	White Knight
Violet	Walrus	Frog
Guard	Carpenter	
Paper Man	Sheep	

NARRATOR One thing was certain, that the white kitten had had nothing to do with it: it was the black kitten's fault entirely. For the white kitten had been having its face washed by the old cat for the last quarter of an hour (and bearing it pretty well, considering); so you see that it couldn't have had any hand in the mischief.

ALICE Oh, you wicked little thing! Really, Dinah ought to have taught you better manners! What have you got to say for yourself? Now don't interrupt me! Kitty, can you play chess? Now, don't smile, my dear, I'm asking it seriously. Because, when we were playing just now, you watched just as if you understood it: and when I said "Check!" you purred! Well, it was a nice check, Kitty, and I might have won, if it hadn't been for that nasty Knight, that came wiggling down among my pieces. Kitty, dear, let's pretend that you're the Red Queen, Kitty! Do you know, I think if you sat up and folded your arms, you'd look exactly like her. Now do try, there's a dear, and if you're not good directly, I'll put you through into Looking-glass House. How would you like that? Let's pretend there's a way of getting through into it, somehow, Kitty. Let's pretend the glass has got all soft like

gauze, so that we can get through. Why, it's turning into a sort of mist now! It'll be easy enough to get through.

NARRATOR She was up on the chimney-piece while she said this, though she hardly knew how she had got there. And certainly the glass was beginning to melt away, just like a bright silvery mist. In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room.

ALICE There's a fire burning on this side, too. So I'll be as warm here as I was in the old room. Warmer, in fact, because there will be no one here to scold me away from the fire. Oh, what fun it'll be, when they see me through the glass in here, and can't get at me!

NARRATOR Then she began looking about, and noticed that what could be seen from the old room was quite common and uninteresting, but that all the rest was as different as possible. For instance, the pictures on the wall next the fire seemed to be all alive, and the clock had the face of a little old man, and grinned at her.

ALICE They don't keep this room so tidy as the other. Oh! The chessmen are walking around! There are the Red King and the Red Queen, and there are the White King and the White Queen sitting on the edge of the shovel and here are two castles walking arm in arm. I don't think they can hear me, and I'm nearly sure they can't see me. I feel somehow as if I were invisible. What's that noise?

W QUEEN It is the voice of my child! My precious Lily! My imperial kitten!

W KING Imperial fiddlestick!

NARRATOR Alice was very anxious to be of use, and, as the poor little Lily was nearly screaming herself into a fit, she hastily picked up the Queen and set her on the table by the side of her noisy little daughter.

W QUEEN AHFFFH! (*pause, gasping*) Mind the volcano!

W KING What volcano?

- W QUEEN** Blew me up! Mind you come up the regular way don't get blown up!
- ALICE** Why, you'll be hours and hours getting to the table, at that rate. I'd far better help you, hadn't I?
- NARRATOR** So Alice picked him up very gently, and lifted him across more slowly than she had lifted the Queen, that she mightn't take his breath away: but, before she put him on the table, she thought she might as well dust him a little, he was so covered with ashes.
- ALICE** *(blows, then laughs)* Oh! Please don't make such faces! You make me laugh so that I can hardly hold you! And don't keep your mouth so wide open! All the ashes will get into it there, now I think you're tidy enough.
- NARRATOR** The King immediately fell flat on his back, and lay perfectly still.
- W KING** I assure, you my dear, I turned cold to the very ends of my whiskers!
- W QUEEN** You haven't got any whiskers.
- W KING** The horror of that moment, I shall never, never forget!
- W QUEEN** You will, though, if you don't make a note of it.
- NARRATOR** Alice looked on with great interest as the King took an enormous notebook out of his pocket, and began writing. A sudden thought struck her, and she took hold of the end of the pencil and began writing for him.
- W KING** My dear! I really must get a thinner pencil. I can't manage this one a bit; it writes all manner of things that I don't intend.
- W QUEEN** What manner of things? *(reading)* ...the white knight is sliding down the poker. He balances very badly.' That's not a note of your feelings!'
- NARRATOR** There was a book lying near Alice on the table, and while she sat watching the White King, she tried to read it, but couldn't.
- ALICE** It's all in some language I don't know. Why, it's a Looking-glass book, of course! And if I hold it up

to a glass, the words will all go the right way again.

Jabberwocky

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves,
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the môme raths outgrabe.

'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird,
and shun the frumious Bandersnatch!'

He took his vorpal sword in hand:
Long time the manxome foe he sought
So rested he by the Tumtum tree,
and stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,
the Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,
and burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through
the vorpal blade went snicker-snack!

He left it dead, and with its head
he went galumphing back.

'And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!'

He chortled in his joy.

ALICE

It seems very pretty, but it's rather hard to understand! Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas only I don't exactly know what they are!

However, somebody killed something: that's clear, at any rate. But oh! If I don't hurry, I'll have to go back through the Looking-glass before I've seen what the rest of the house is like! I'll look at the garden first! I should see the garden far better if I could get to the top of that hill: and here's a path that leads straight to it at least, no, it doesn't do that, but I suppose it will at last. But how curiously it twists! It's more like a corkscrew than a path!

Well, this turn goes to the hill, I suppose no, it doesn't! This goes straight back to the house! Well then, I'll try it the other way.

NARRATOR And so she did: wandering up and down, and trying turn after turn, but always coming back to the house, do what she would. Indeed, once, when she turned a corner rather more quickly than usual, she ran against it before she could stop herself.

ALICE It's no use talking about it I'm not going in again yet. I know I should have to get through the Looking-glass again back into the old room and there'd be an end of all my adventures!

NARRATOR This time she came upon a large flower-bed, with a border of daisies, and a willow-tree growing in the middle.

ALICE Tiger-lily, I wish you could talk!

TIGER LILY We can talk, when there's anybody worth talking to.

ALICE And can all the flowers talk?

TIGER LILY As well as you can. And a great deal louder.

ROSE It isn't manners for us to begin, you know, and I really was wondering when you'd speak! Said I to myself, "Her face has got some sense in it, though it's not a clever one!" Still, you're the right color, and that goes a long way.

TIGER LILY I don't care about the color. If only her petals curled up a little more, she'd be all right.

ALICE Aren't you sometimes frightened at being planted out here, with nobody to take care of you?

ROSE There's the tree in the middle, what else is it good for?

ALICE But what could it do, if any danger came?

DAISY It says "Bough-wough!" That's why its branches are called boughs! Didn't you know that?

FLOWERS all talk

TIGER LILY Silence, every one of you! They know I can't get at them, or they wouldn't dare to do it!

ALICE If you don't hold your tongues, I'll pick you!

Silence

- TIGER LILY** That's right! The daisies are worst of all. When one speaks, they all begin together, and it's enough to make one wither to hear the way they go on!
- ALICE** How is it you can all talk so nicely? I've been in many gardens before, but none of the flowers could talk.
- TIGER LILY** Put your hand down, and feel the ground. Then you'll know why.
- ALICE** It's very hard, but I don't see what that has to do with it.
- TIGER LILY** In most gardens, they make the beds too soft so that the flowers are always asleep.
- ALICE** I never thought of that before!
- ROSE** It's my opinion that you never think at all.
- VIOLET** I never saw anybody that looked stupider.
- TIGER LILY** Hold your tongue! As if you ever saw anybody! You keep your head under the leaves, and snore away there, till you know no more what's going on in the world, than if you were a bud!
- ALICE** Are there any more people in the garden besides me?
- ROSE** There's one other flower in the garden that can move about like you. I wonder how you do it.
- TIGER LILY** You're always wondering. But she's more bushy than you are.
- ALICE** Is she like me? There's another little girl in the garden, somewhere!
- ROSE** Well, she has the same awkward shape as you, but she's redder and her petals are shorter, I think.
- TIGER LILY** Her petals are done up close, almost like a dahlia, not tumbled about anyhow, like yours.
- ROSE** But that's not your fault. You're beginning to fade, you know and then one can't help one's petals getting a little untidy.
- ALICE** Does she ever come out here?
- ROSE** I daresay you'll see her soon. She's one of the thorny kind.
- ALICE** Where does she wear the thorns?

- ROSE** Why all round her head, of course. I was wondering you hadn't got some too. I thought it was the regular rule.
- VIOLET** She's coming! I hear her footstep, thump, thump, thump, along the gravel-walk!
- ALICE** It's the Red Queen! She's grown a good deal!
- ROSE** It's the fresh air that does it. Wonderfully fine air it is, out here.
- ALICE** I think I'll go and meet her.
- ROSE** You can't possibly do that. I should advise you to walk the other way.
- NARRATOR** This sounded nonsense to Alice, so she said nothing, but set off at once towards the Red Queen. To her surprise, she lost sight of her in a moment, and found herself walking in at the front-door again. A little provoked, she drew back, and after looking everywhere for the queen (whom she spied out at last, a long way off), she thought she would try the plan, this time, of walking in the opposite direction.
- RED QUEEN** Where do you come from? And where are you going? Look up, speak nicely, and don't twiddle your fingers all the time.
- ALICE** I've lost my way.
- RED QUEEN** I don't know what you mean by your way, all the ways about here belong to me but why did you come out here at all? Curtsey while you're thinking what to say, it saves time.
- ALICE** I'll try it when I go home the next time I'm a little late for dinner.
- RED QUEEN** It's time for you to answer now. Open your mouth a little wider when you speak, and always say "your Majesty."
- ALICE** I only wanted to see what the garden was like, your Majesty.
- RED QUEEN** That's right, though, when you say "garden," I've seen gardens, compared with which this would be a wilderness.

ALICE And I thought I'd try and find my way to the top of that hill.

RED QUEEN When you say "hill," I could show you hills, in comparison with which you'd call that a valley.

ALICE No, I shouldn't. A hill can't be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense.

RED QUEEN You may call it "nonsense" if you like, but I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary! Here's the top of the hill.

ALICE It's marked out just like a large chessboard! There ought to be some men moving about somewhere, ...and so there are! It's a great huge game of chess that's being played, all over the world, if this is the world at all, you know. Oh, what fun it is! How I wish I was one of them! I wouldn't mind being a Pawn, if only I might join, though of course I should like to be a Queen, best.

RED QUEEN That's easily managed. You can be the White Queen's Pawn, if you like, as Lily's too young to play; and you're in the Second Square to begin with: when you get to the Eighth Square you'll be a Queen.

NARRATOR Just at this moment, somehow or other, they began to run.

RED QUEEN Faster! Faster!

NARRATOR The most curious part of the thing was, that the trees and the other things round them never changed their places at all: however fast they went, they never seemed to pass anything.

ALICE I wonder if all the things move along with us?

RED QUEEN Faster! Don't try to talk! Faster! Faster!

ALICE Are we nearly there?

RED QUEEN Nearly there! Why, we passed it ten minutes ago! Faster! Now! Now! Faster! Faster! STOP! (*pause*) You may rest a little now.

ALICE Why, I do believe we've been under this tree the whole time! Everything's just as it was!

RED QUEEN Of course it is. What would you have it?

- ALICE** Well, in our country, you'd generally get to somewhere else if you ran very fast for a long time, as we've been doing.
- RED QUEEN** A slow sort of country! Now, here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!
- ALICE** I'd rather not try, please! I'm quite content to stay here, only I am so hot and thirsty!
- RED QUEEN** I know what you'd like! Have a biscuit? While you're refreshing yourself, I'll just take the measurements. At the end of two yards I shall give you your directions--have another biscuit?
- ALICE** No, thank you, one's quite enough!
- RED QUEEN** Thirst quenched, I hope? At the end of three yards I shall repeat them, for fear of your forgetting them. At the end of four, I shall say good-bye. And at the end of five, I shall go! A pawn goes two squares in its first move, you know. So you'll go very quickly through the Third Square, by railway, I should think, and you'll find yourself in the Fourth Square in no time. Well, that square belongs to Tweedledum and Tweedledee, the Fifth is mostly water, the Sixth belongs to Humpty Dumpty, But you make no remark?
- ALICE** I -- I didn't know I had to make one, just then.
- RED QUEEN** You should have said, "It's extremely kind of you to tell me all this", however, we'll suppose it said. The Seventh Square is all forest, however, one of the Knights will show you the way, and in the Eighth Square we shall be Queens together, and it's all feasting and fun! Speak in French when you can't think of the English for a thing, turn out your toes as you walk, and remember who you are!
- NARRATOR** And she was gone. Whether she vanished into the air, or whether she ran quickly into the wood...
- ALICE** And she can run very fast!

- NARRATOR** ...there was no way of guessing, but she was gone, and Alice began to remember that she was a Pawn, and that it would soon be time for her to move.
- ALICE** It's something very like learning geography. Principal rivers, there are none. Principal mountains, I'm on the only one, but I don't think it's got any name. Principal towns, why, what are those creatures, making honey down there? They can't be bees, nobody ever saw bees a mile off, you know. But there they are, bustling about among the flowers, just as if they were regular bees. And what enormous flowers they must be! Something like houses with the roofs taken off, and think of all the honey they must make! I think I'll go down and, no, I won't just yet. It'll never do to go down among them without a good long branch to brush them away, and what fun it'll be when they ask me how I like my walk. I'll say, "Oh, I like it well enough, only it was so dusty and hot, and the elephants did tease so!" I think I'll go down the other way, and perhaps I may visit the elephants later on. Besides, I do so want to get into the Third Square!
- NARRATOR** Around the next bend, Alice found she had reached the train station.
- GUARD** Tickets, please! Now then! Show your ticket, child!
- PAPER MAN** Don't keep him waiting, child! Why, his time is worth a thousand pounds a minute!
- ALICE** I'm afraid I haven't got one. There wasn't a ticket-office where I came from.
- GOAT** There wasn't room for one where she came from. The land there is worth a thousand pounds an inch!
- GUARD** Don't make excuses. You should have bought one from the engine-driver.
- BEETLE** The man that drives the engine. Why, the smoke alone is worth a thousand pounds a puff!
- ALICE** Then there's no use in speaking.

- HORSE** Better say nothing at all. Language is worth a thousand pounds a word!
- ALICE** I'll dream about a thousand pounds tonight, I know I will!
- GUARD** You're traveling the wrong way.
- NARRATOR** In the train car sat a man dressed entirely in newspaper, an old goat wearing glasses, and a beetle. It was a very strange carriage-full of passengers altogether.
- PAPER MAN** So young a child, ought to know which way she's going, even if she doesn't know her own name!
- GOAT** She ought to know her way to the ticket-office, even if she doesn't know her alphabet!
- BEETLE** She'll have to go back from here as luggage!
- NARRATOR** Alice couldn't see who was sitting beyond the Beetle, but a hoarse voice spoke next.
- HORSE** Change engines...(*coughs*)
- ALICE** It sounds like a horse.
- NARRATOR** And an extremely small voice, close to her ear, said,
- GNAT** You might make a joke on that, something about "horse" and "hoarse," you know.
- GUARD** She must be labelled "Lass, with care," you know.
- GOAT** She must go by post, as she's got a head on her.
- BEETLE** She must be sent as a message by the telegraph.
- HORSE** She must pull the train herself the rest of the way...(*cough*)
- PAPER MAN** Never mind what they all say, my dear, but take a return-ticket every time the train stops.
- ALICE** I don't belong on this railway journey at all! I was in a wood just now,, and I wish I could get back there.
- GNAT** You might make a joke on that. Something about "you would if you could," you know.
- ALICE** If you're so anxious to have a joke made, why don't you make one yourself?
- GNAT** (*sigh*) I know you are a friend, a dear friend, and an old friend. And you won't hurt me, though I am an insect.

ALICE What kind of insect?
GNAT What, then you don't...

Train whistle

HORSE It's only a brook we have to jump over.
NARRATOR She felt the carriage rise straight up into the air, and in her fright, she caught at the thing nearest to her hand, which happened to be the Goat's beard. But the beard seemed to melt away as she touched it, and she found herself sitting quietly under a tree, while the Gnat (for that was the insect she had been talking to) was balancing itself on a twig just over her head, and fanning her with its wings.

GNAT Then you don't like all insects?

ALICE I like them when they can talk. None of them ever talk, where I come from.

GNAT What sort of insects do you rejoice in, where you come from?

ALICE I don't rejoice in insects at all, because I'm rather afraid of them, at least the large kinds. But I can tell you the names of some of them.

GNAT Of course, they answer to their names?

ALICE I never knew them do it.

GNAT What's the use of their having names if they won't answer to them?

ALICE No use to them, but it's useful to the people who name them, I suppose. If not, why do things have names at all?

GNAT I can't say. Further on, in the wood down there, they've got no names, however, go on with your list of insects: you're wasting time.

ALICE Well, there's the Horse-fly...

GNAT All right, half way up that bush, you'll see a Rocking-horse-fly, if you look. It's made entirely of wood, and gets about by swinging itself from branch to branch.

ALICE What does it live on?

GNAT Sap and sawdust. Go on with the list.

ALICE And there's the Dragon-fly.

GNAT Look on the branch above your head, and there you'll find a snap-dragon-fly. Its body is made of pudding, its wings of holly-leaves, and its head is a raisin burning in brandy.

ALICE And what does it live on?

GNAT Frumenty and mince pie, and it makes its nest in a Christmas box.

ALICE And then there's the Butterfly.

GNAT Crawling at your feet you may observe a Bread-and-Butterfly. Its wings are thin slices of Bread-and-butter, its body is a crust, and its head is a lump of sugar.

ALICE And what does it live on?

GNAT Weak tea with cream in it.

ALICE Supposing it couldn't find any?

GNAT Then it would die, of course.

ALICE But that must happen very often.

GNAT It always happens. I suppose you don't want to lose your name?

ALICE No, indeed.

GNAT And yet I don't know. Only think how convenient it would be if you could manage to go home without it! For instance, if your teacher wanted to call you to your lessons, she would call out "come here, ," and there she would have to leave off, because there wouldn't be any name for her to call, and of course you wouldn't have to go, you know.

ALICE That wouldn't work. My teacher would never think of excusing me lessons for that. If she couldn't remember my name, she'd call me "Miss!"

GNAT Well, if she said "Miss," and didn't say anything more, of course you'd miss your lessons. That's a joke. I wish you had made it.

ALICE Why do you wish I had made it? It's a very bad one.

GNAT sighs, then cries

ALICE You shouldn't make jokes if it makes you so unhappy.

NARRATOR Then came another of those melancholy little sighs, and this time the poor Gnat really seemed to have sighed itself away, for, when Alice looked up, there was nothing whatever to be seen on the twig, and, as she was getting quite chilly with sitting still so long, she got up and walked on.

ALICE This must be the wood where things have no names. I wonder what'll become of my name when I go in? I shouldn't like to lose it at all, because they'd have to give me another, and it would be almost certain to be an ugly one. But then the fun would be trying to find the creature that had got my old name! Just think, calling everything you met "Alice," till one of them answered! Only they wouldn't answer at all, if they were wise. This wood is very cool and shady. It's nice, after being so hot, to get into the... into what? I mean to get under the, under the, under this, you know! What does it call itself, I wonder? I do believe it's got no name, why, to be sure it hasn't! Then it really has happened, after all! And now, who am I? I will remember, if I can! I'm determined to do it! L, I know it begins with L!

NARRATOR Just then a Fawn came wandering by. It looked at Alice with its large gentle eyes, but didn't seem at all frightened.

FAWN What do you call yourself?

ALICE I wish I knew! Nothing, just now.

FAWN Think again, that won't do.

ALICE Please, would you tell me what you call yourself? I think that might help a little.

FAWN I'll tell you, if you'll move a little further on. I can't remember here.

NARRATOR So they walked on together though the wood, Alice with her arms clasped lovingly round the soft neck of the Fawn, till they came out into another open field, and here the Fawn gave a sudden bound into the air, and shook itself free from Alice's arms.

FAWN I'm a Fawn! And, dear me! you're a human child!

- ALICE** Well, at least I know my name now, that's some comfort. Alice, Alice, I won't forget it again. And now, which of these finger-posts ought I to follow, I wonder? I'll figure it out when the road divides and they point different ways.
- NARRATOR** But this did not seem likely to happen. She went on and on, a long way, but wherever the road divided there were sure to be two finger-posts pointing the same way, one marked "to Tweedledum's house" and the other "to the house of Tweedledee."
- ALICE** I do believe that they live in the same house! I wonder I never thought of that before, But I can't stay there long. I'll just call and say "how d'you do?" and ask them the way out of the wood. If I could only get to the Eighth Square before it gets dark!
- NARRATOR** And on she went, till, on turning a sharp corner, she came upon two fat little men, so suddenly that she could not help starting back, but in another moment, she recovered herself. They stood so still that she quite forgot they were alive, and she was just looking round to see if the word "Tweedle" was written at the back of each collar, when she was startled by a voice coming from the one marked "dum."
- DUM** If you think we're wax-works, you ought to pay, you know. Wax-works weren't made to be looked at for nothing, nohow!
- DEE** Contrariwise, if you think we're alive, you ought to speak.
- ALICE** I'm sure I'm very sorry, but you remind me of a poem I heard.
- Tweedledum and Tweedledee
agreed to have a battle;
For Tweedledum said Tweedledee
had spoiled his nice new rattle.
Just then flew down a monstrous crow,
as black as a tar-barrel;

Which frightened both the heroes so,
they quite forgot their quarrel.

DUM I know what you're thinking, but it isn't so, nohow.

DEE Contrariwise, if it was so, it might be; and if it were so, it would be; but as it isn't, it ain't. That's logic.

ALICE I was thinking, which is the best way out of this wood: it's getting so dark. Would you tell me, please?

NARRATOR But the little men only looked at each other and grinned. They looked so exactly like a couple of great schoolboys, that Alice couldn't help pointing her finger at Tweedledum.

ALICE First Boy!

DUM Nohow!

ALICE Next Boy!

DEE Contrariwise!

DUM You've been wrong! The first thing in a visit is to say "How d'ye do?" and shake hands!

NARRATOR And here the two brothers gave each other a hug, and then they held out the two hands that were free, to shake hands with her. Now, Alice did not like shaking hands with either of them first, for fear of hurting the other one's feelings; so, as the best way out of the difficulty, she took hold of both hands at once: the next moment they were dancing round in a ring. This seemed quite natural, and she was not even surprised to hear music playing: it seemed to come from the tree under which they were dancing, and it was done (as well as she could make it out) by the branches rubbing one across the other, like fiddles and fiddle-sticks.

ALL THREE: Here we go round the Mulberry bush.

DUM Four times round is enough for one dance.

ALICE I hope you're not too tired?

DUM Nohow. And thank you very much for asking.

DEE So much obliged! You like poetry?

ALICE Ye-es, pretty well, some poetry. Would you tell me which road leads out of the wood?

- DEE** What shall I repeat to her?
- DUM** "The Walrus and the Carpenter" is the longest.
- DEE** The sun was shining...
- ALICE** If it's very long, would you please tell me first which road...
- DEE** The sun was shining on the sea, shining with all his might:
He did his very best to make the billows smooth and bright,
And this was odd, because it was the middle of the night.
- DUM** The moon was shining sulkily, because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there after the day was done
"It's very rude of him," she said, "To come and spoil the fun!"
- DEE** The sea was wet as wet could be, the sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because no cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying over head There were no birds to fly.
- DUM** The Walrus and the Carpenter were walking close at hand;
They wept like anything to see such quantities of sand:
If this were only cleared away, they said, it would be grand!
- WALRUS** If seven maids with seven mops swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,
- DEE** The Walrus said,
- WALRUS** That they could get it clear?
- CARPENTER** I doubt it,
- DUM** said the Carpenter, and shed a bitter tear.
- WALRUS** O Oysters, come and walk with us!
- TWEEDLEDEE** The Walrus did beseech.
- WALRUS** A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk, along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four, to give a hand to each."
- DUM** The eldest Oyster looked at him. But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye, and shook his heavy head
Meaning to say he did not choose to leave the oyster-bed.
- DEE** But four young oysters hurried up, all eager for the treat:
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed, their shoes were clean and neat
And this was odd, because, you know, they hadn't any feet.
- DUM** Four other Oysters followed them, and yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last, and more, and more, and more

All hopping through the frothy waves, and scrambling to the shore.

DEE The Walrus and the Carpenter walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood and waited in a row.

WALRUS The time has come!

DEE The Walrus said,

WALRUS To talk of many things:
Of shoes, and ships, and sealing-wax of cabbages, and
kings,
And why the sea is boiling hot and whether pigs have
wings.

DUM But wait a bit, the Oysters cried, Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath, and all of us are fat!

CARPENTER No hurry!

DEE Said the Carpenter. They thanked him much for
that.

WALRUS A loaf of bread,

DEE the Walrus said,

WALRUS Is what we chiefly need:
Pepper and vinegar besides are very good indeed
Now if you're ready Oysters dear, we can begin to feed."

DUM But not on us! the Oysters cried, turning a little blue,
After such kindness, that would be a dismal thing to do!

WALRUS The night is fine,

DEE the Walrus said,

WALRUS Do you admire the view?
It was so kind of you to come! And you are very nice!

DEE The Carpenter said nothing but

CARPENTER Cut us another slice:
I wish you were not quite so deaf I've had to ask you twice!

WALRUS It seems a shame,

DUM the Walrus said,

WALRUS To play them such a trick,
after we've brought them out so far, and made them trot so
quick!

DEE The Carpenter said nothing but,

CARPENTER The butter's spread too thick!

WALRUS I weep for you,

DUM the Walrus said.

WALRUS I deeply sympathize.

DEE With sobs and tears he sorted out those of the largest size.

Holding his pocket handkerchief before his streaming eyes.

CARPENTER O Oysters,

DUM said the Carpenter.

CARPENTER You've had a pleasant run!

Shall we be trotting home again?

DUM But answer came there none.

And that was scarcely odd, because they'd eaten every one.

ALICE I like the Walrus best, because he was a little sorry
for the poor oysters.

DEE He ate more than the Carpenter, though. You see,
he held his handkerchief in front, so that the
Carpenter couldn't count how many he took:
contrariwise.

ALICE That was mean! Then I like the Carpenter best, if
he didn't eat so many as the Walrus.

DUM But he ate as many as he could get.

ALICE Well! They were both very unpleasant characters.

Snore, from off stage

Are there any lions or tigers about here?

DEE It's only the Red King snoring.

DUM Come and look at him! Isn't he a lovely sight?

NARRATOR Alice couldn't say honestly that he was. He had a
tall red night-cap on, with a tassel, and he was
lying crumpled up into a sort of untidy heap, and
snoring loud enough to snore his head off!

ALICE I'm afraid he'll catch cold with lying on the damp
grass.

DEE He's dreaming now. And what do you think he's
dreaming about?

ALICE Nobody can guess that.

DEE Why, about you! And if he stopped dreaming about
you, where do you suppose you'd be?

ALICE Where I am now, of course.

DEE Not you! You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a
sort of thing in his dream!

DUM If that there King was to wake, you'd go out, bang!, just like a candle!

ALICE No I won't! Besides, if I'm only a sort of thing in his dream, what are you, I should like to know?

DUM Ditto.

DEE Ditto, ditto!

ALICE Hush! You'll be waking him, I'm afraid, if you make so much noise.

DUM Well, its no use, your talking about waking him when you're only one of the things in his dream. You know very well you're not real.

ALICE I am real! (*cries*)

DEE You won't make yourself a bit realler by crying. There's nothing to cry about.

ALICE If I wasn't real, I shouldn't be able to cry.

DUM I hope you don't suppose those are real tears?

ALICE I know you're talking nonsense, and it's foolish to cry about it. At any rate I'd better be getting out of the wood, for really, it's coming on very dark. Do you think it's going to rain?

DUM No, I don't think it is, at least not under my umbrella. Nohow.

ALICE But it may rain outside?

DEE It may if it chooses. We've no objection. Contrariwise.

ALICE Selfish things!

DUM Do you see that?

ALICE It's only a rattle. Not a rattleSNAKE, you know, only an old rattle, quite old and broken.

DUM I knew it was! It's spoilt, of course!

ALICE You needn't be so angry about an old rattle.

DUM But it isn't old! It's new, I tell you, I bought it yesterday, my nice new RATTLE!

NARRATOR All this time Tweedledee was trying his best to fold up the umbrella, with himself in it: which was such an extraordinary thing to do, that it quite took off Alice's attention from the angry brother. But he couldn't quite succeed, and it ended in his rolling over, bundled up in the umbrella, with only his

head out: and there he lay, opening and shutting his mouth and his large eyes looking more like a fish than anything else.

DUM *(calmly)* Of course you agree to have a battle?

DEE I suppose so, only she must help us to dress up, you know.

NARRATOR So the two brothers went off hand-in-hand into the wood, and returned in a minute with their arms full of things, such as bolsters, blankets, hearth-rugs, table-cloths, dish-covers and coal-scuttles.

DUM I hope you're a good hand at pinning and tying strings? Every one of these things has got to go on, somehow or other.

ALICE You'll look more like bundles of old clothes than anything else, by the time you're ready! Here, put this on, to keep your head from being cut off.

DEE You know, it's one of the most serious things that can possibly happen to one in a battle, to get one's head cut off.

Alice laughs, then coughs

DUM Do I look very pale?

ALICE Well yes a little.

DUM I'm very brave generally, only to-day I happen to have a headache.

DEE And I've got a toothache! I'm far worse off than you!

ALICE Then you'd better not fight to-day.

DUM We must have a bit of a fight, but I don't care about going on long. What's the time now?

DEE Half-past four.

DUM Let's fight till six, and then have dinner.

DEE Very well, and she can watch us, only you'd better not come very close. I generally hit everything I can see when I get really excited.

DUM And I hit everything within reach, whether I can see it or not!

ALICE You must hit the trees pretty often, I should think.

DUM I don't suppose there'll be a tree left standing, for ever so far round, by the time we've finished!

ALICE And all about a rattle!

DUM I shouldn't have minded it so much, if it hadn't been a new one.

ALICE I wish the monstrous crow would come!

DUM There's only one sword, you know, but you can have the umbrella: it's quite as sharp. Only we must begin quick. It's getting as dark as it can.

DEE And darker.

ALICE What a thick black cloud that is! And how fast it comes! Why, I do believe it's got wings!

DUM It's the crow!

NARRATOR And the two brothers took to their heels and were out of sight in a moment. Alice ran a little way into the wood, and stopped under a large tree.

ALICE It can never get at me here. It's far too large to squeeze itself in among the trees. But I wish it wouldn't flap its wings so, it makes quite a hurricane in the wood, here's somebody's shawl being blown away!

NARRATOR She caught the shawl as she spoke, and looked about for the owner: in another moment the White Queen came running wildly through the wood, with both arms stretched out wide, as if she were flying, and Alice very civilly went to meet her with the shawl.

ALICE I'm very glad I happened to be in the way.

W QUEEN Bread-and-butter, bread-and-butter...

ALICE Am I addressing the White Queen?

W QUEEN Well, yes, if you call that a-dressing. It isn't my notion of the thing, at all.

ALICE If your Majesty will only tell me the right way to begin, I'll do it as well as I can.

W QUEEN But I don't want it done at all! I've been a-dressing myself for the last two hours.

ALICE Every single thing's crooked. May I put your shawl straight for you?

W QUEEN I don't know what's the matter with it! It's out of temper, I think. I've pinned it here, and I've pinned it there, but there's no pleasing it!

- ALICE** It can't go straight, you know, if you pin it all on one side. And, dear me, what a state your hair is in!
- W QUEEN** The brush has got entangled in it! And I lost the comb yesterday.
- ALICE** You look better now! But really you should have someone help you dress!
- W QUEEN** I'm sure I'll take you with pleasure! Two dollars a week, and jam every other day.
- ALICE** (*laughs*) I don't want you to hire me and I don't like jam.
- W QUEEN** It's very good jam.
- ALICE** Well, I don't want any to-day, at any rate.
- W QUEEN** You couldn't have it if you did want it. The rule is, jam to-morrow and jam yesterday but never jam to-day.
- ALICE** It must come sometimes to "jam to-day."
- W QUEEN** No, it can't. It's jam every other day: to-day isn't any other day, you know.
- ALICE** I don't understand you. It's dreadfully confusing!
- W QUEEN** That's the effect of living backwards. It always makes one a little giddy at first.
- ALICE** Living backwards! I never heard of such a thing!
- W QUEEN** But there's one great advantage in it, that one's memory works both ways.
- ALICE** I'm sure mine only works one way. I can't remember things before they happen.
- W QUEEN** It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards.
- ALICE** What sort of things do you remember best?
- W QUEEN** Oh, things that happened the week after next. For instance, now, there's the King's Messenger. He's in prison now, being punished: and the trial doesn't even begin till next Wednesday: and, of course, the crime comes last of all.
- ALICE** Suppose he never commits the crime?
- W QUEEN** That would be all the better, wouldn't it?
- ALICE** Of course, it would be all the better, but it wouldn't be all the better his being punished.

- W QUEEN** You're wrong there, at any rate. Were you ever punished?
- ALICE** Only for misbehaving.
- W QUEEN** And you were all the better for it, I know!
- ALICE** Yes, but then I had done the things I was punished for. That makes all the difference.
- W QUEEN** But if you hadn't done them that would have been better still; better, and better, and better!
- ALICE** There's a mistake somewhere...
- W QUEEN** Oh, oh, oh! My finger's bleeding! Oh, oh, oh, oh!
- ALICE** What is the matter? Have you pricked your finger?
- W QUEEN** I haven't pricked it yet, but I soon shall. Oh, oh, oh!
- ALICE** When do you expect to do it?
- W QUEEN** When I fasten my shawl again, the brooch will come undone directly. Oh, oh!
- ALICE** Be careful! You're holding it all crooked! Oh, you did it! You pricked your finger!
- W QUEEN** That accounts for the bleeding, you see. Now you understand the way things happen here.
- ALICE** But why don't you scream now?
- W QUEEN** Why, I've done all the screaming already. What would be the good of doing it all over again?
- ALICE** The crow must have flown away, I think. I'm so glad it's gone. I thought it was the night coming on.
- W QUEEN** I wish I could manage to be glad! Only I never can remember the rule. You must be very happy, living in this wood, and being glad whenever you like!
- ALICE** Only it is so very lonely here!
- W QUEEN** Oh, don't go on like that! Consider what a great girl you are. Consider what a long way you've come to-day. Consider what o'clock it is. Consider anything, only don't cry!
- ALICE** (*laughs*) Can you keep from crying by considering things?
- W QUEEN** That's the way it's done. Nobody can do two things at once, you know. Let's consider your age to begin with: how old are you?

- ALICE** I'm seven and a half exactly.
- W QUEEN** You needn't say "exactly." I can believe it without that. Now I'll give you something to believe. I'm just one hundred and one, five months and a day.
- ALICE** I can't believe that!
- W QUEEN** Can't you? Try again: draw a long breath, and shut your eyes.
- ALICE** There's no use trying. I can't believe impossible things.
- W QUEEN** I daresay you haven't had much practice. When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast. There goes the shawl again! I've got it! Now you shall see me pin it on again, all by myself!
- ALICE** Then I hope your finger is better now?
- W QUEEN** Oh, much better! Much be-etter! Be-etter! Be-e-e-etter! Be-e-ehh!
- NARRATOR** The last word ended in a long bleat, so like a sheep that Alice quite started. She looked at the Queen, who seemed to have suddenly wrapped herself up in wool. Alice rubbed her eyes, and looked again. She couldn't make out what had happened at all. Was she in a shop? And was that really--was it really a sheep that was sitting on the other side of the counter?
- SHEEP** What is it you want to buy?
- ALICE** I don't quite know yet. I should like to look all round me first, if I might.
- SHEEP** You may look in front of you, and on both sides, if you like, but you can't look all round you, unless you've got eyes at the back of your head.
- ALICE** Things flow about so here!
- SHEEP** Are you a child or a teetotum? You'll make me giddy soon, if you go on turning round like that. Can you row a boat?
- ALICE** Yes, a little. But not on land...

- NARRATOR** And suddenly she found they were in a little boat, gliding along between banks.
- SHEEP** Feather! Feather! Feather! You'll be catching a crab directly.
- ALICE** A dear little crab! I should like that.
- SHEEP** Didn't you hear me say "Feather"?
- ALICE** Yes, you've said it very often and very loud.
Please, where are the crabs?
- SHEEP** In the water, of course! Feather, I say!
- ALICE** Why do you say "feather" so often? I'm not a bird!
- SHEEP** You are. You're a little goose.
- ALICE** Oh, please! There are some scented rushes! There really are, and such beauties!
- SHEEP** You needn't say "please" to me about 'em. I didn't put 'em there, and I'm not going to take 'em away.
- ALICE** No, but I meant, please, may we wait and pick some? If you don't mind stopping the boat for a minute.
- SHEEP** How am I to stop it? If you leave off rowing, it'll stop itself.
- ALICE** I only hope the boat won't tip over! Oh, what a lovely one! Only I can't quite reach it. Almost as if it's doing it on purpose. The prettiest are always further! Oh, oh, oh!
- Splash as ALICE drops crab*
- SHEEP** That was a nice crab you caught!
- ALICE** Was it? I didn't see it. I wish it hadn't let go, I should so like to see a little crab to take home with me! Are there many crabs here?
- SHEEP** Crabs, and all sorts of things. Plenty of choice, only make up your mind. Now, what do you want to buy?
- ALICE** To buy!
- NARRATOR** The oars, and the boat, and the river, had vanished all in a moment, and she was back again in the little dark shop.
- ALICE** I should like to buy an egg, please. How do you sell them?
- SHEEP** A nickel for one, two pennies for two.

- ALICE** Then two are cheaper than one?
- SHEEP** Only you must eat them both, if you buy two.
- ALICE** Then I'll have one, please. They might not be any good.
- SHEEP** I never put things into people's hands, that would never do, you must get it for yourself.
- ALICE** I wonder why it wouldn't do? The egg seems to get further away the more I walk towards it. Let me see, is this a chair? Why, it's got branches on it! How very odd to find trees growing here! And here's a little brook! Well, this is the strangest shop I ever saw!
- NARRATOR** The egg got larger and larger, and more and more human: when she had come within a few yards of it, she saw that it had eyes and a nose and mouth; and when she had come close to it, she saw clearly that it was Humpty Dumpty himself!
- ALICE** It can't be anybody else! It's like his name is written all over his face. And how exactly like an egg he is!
- HUMPTY** It's very provoking to be called an egg. VERY!
- ALICE** I said you looked like an egg, Sir. And some eggs are very pretty, you know.
- HUMPTY** Some people have no more sense than a baby!
- ALICE** Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall:
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the King's horses and all the King's men
couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again.
- HUMPTY** Don't stand there chattering to yourself like that. Tell me your name and your business.
- ALICE** My name is Alice, but...
- HUMPTY** It's a stupid enough name! What does it mean?
- ALICE** Must a name mean something?
- HUMPTY** Of course, it must. My name means the shape I am, and a good handsome shape it is, too. With a name like yours, you might be any shape, almost.
- ALICE** Why do you sit out here all alone?

- HUMPTY** Why, because there's nobody with me! Did you think I didn't know the answer to that? Ask another.
- ALICE** Don't you think you'd be safer down on the ground? That wall is so very narrow!
- HUMPTY** What tremendously easy riddles you ask! Of course, I don't think so! Why, if ever I did fall off, which there's no chance of, but if I did, If I did fall, the King has promised me, ah, you may turn pale, if you like! You didn't think I was going to say that, did you? The King has promised me with his very own mouth, to, to...
- ALICE** To send all his horses and all his men.
- HUMPTY** Now I declare that's too bad! You've been listening at doors, and behind trees, and down chimneys or you couldn't have known it!
- ALICE** I haven't, indeed! It's in a book.
- HUMPTY** AH, Well! They may write such things in a book. That's what you call History, that is. Now, take a good look at me! I'm one that has spoken to a King, I am: mayhap you'll never see such another: and to show you I'm not proud, you may shake hands with me!
- ALICE** If he smiled much more, the ends of his mouth might meet behind, and then I don't know what would happen to his head! I'm afraid it would come off!
- HUMPTY** Yes, all his horses and all his men. They'd pick me up again in a minute, they would! However, this conversation is going on a little too fast: let's go back to the last remark but one.
- ALICE** I'm afraid I can't quite remember it.
- HUMPTY** In that case we start fresh, and it's my turn to choose a subject. So here's a question for you. How old did you say you were?
- ALICE** Seven years and six months.
- HUMPTY** Wrong! You never said a word like it!
- ALICE** I thought you meant "How old are you?"

- HUMPTY** If I'd meant that, I'd have said it. Seven years and six months! An uncomfortable sort of age. Now if you'd asked my advice, I'd have said "Leave off at seven", but it's too late now.
- ALICE** I never ask advice about growing.
- HUMPTY** Too proud?
- ALICE** I mean, that one can't help growing older.
- HUMPTY** One can't, perhaps, but two can. With proper assistance, you might have left off at seven.
- ALICE** What a beautiful belt you've got on! I, mean, a beautiful tie, I should have said...no, a belt, I mean....I'm sorry...If I only knew, which was neck and which was waist!
- HUMPTY** It is a, most, provoking, thing, when a person doesn't know a necktie from a belt!
- ALICE** I know it's very ignorant of me.
- HUMPTY** It's a necktie, child, and a beautiful one, as you say. It's a present from the White King and Queen. There now!
- ALICE** Is it really?
- HUMPTY** They gave it to me for an un-birthday present.
- ALICE** I beg your pardon?
- HUMPTY** I'm not offended.
- ALICE** I mean, what is an un-birthday present?
- HUMPTY** A present given when it isn't your birthday, of course.
- ALICE** I like birthday presents best.
- HUMPTY** You don't know what you're talking about! How many days are there in a year?
- ALICE** Three hundred and sixty-five.
- HUMPTY** And how many birthdays have you?
- ALICE** One.
- HUMPTY** And if you take one from three hundred and sixty-five, what remains?
- ALICE** Three hundred and sixty-four, of course.
- HUMPTY** I'd rather see that done on paper. That seems to be done right...
- ALICE** You're holding it upside down!

- HUMPTY** To be sure I was! I thought it looked a little odd. As I was saying, that seems to be done right though I haven't time to look it over thoroughly just now, and that shows that there are three hundred and sixty-four days when you might get un-birthday presents.
- ALICE** Certainly.
- HUMPTY** And only one for birthday presents, you know. There's glory for you!
- ALICE** I don't know what you mean by "glory."
- HUMPTY** Of course you don't, till I tell you. I meant "there's a nice knock-down argument for you!"
- ALICE** But "glory" doesn't mean "a nice knock-down argument."
- HUMPTY** When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.
- ALICE** The question is whether you can make words mean so many different things.
- HUMPTY** The question is, which is to be master, that's all. They've a temper, some of them, particularly verbs, they're the proudest, adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs, however, I can manage the whole lot of them! Impenetrability! That's what I say!
- ALICE** Would you tell me, please, what that means?
- HUMPTY** Now you talk like a reasonable child. I meant by "impenetrability" that we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't mean to stop here all the rest of your life.
- ALICE** That's a great deal to make one word mean.
- HUMPTY** When I make a word do a lot of work like that, I always pay it extra.
- ALICE** Oh!
- HUMPTY** Ah, you should see 'em come round me of a Saturday night, to get their wages, you know.
- ALICE** You seem very clever at explaining words, Sir. Would you kindly tell me the meaning of the poem called "Jabberwocky"?

- HUMPTY** Let's hear it. I can explain all the poems that were ever invented, and a good many that haven't been invented just yet.
- ALICE** 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves, and the mome raths outgrabe.
- HUMPTY** That's enough to begin with. There are plenty of hard words there. "BRILLIG" means four o'clock in the afternoon, the time when you begin broiling things for dinner.
- ALICE** OK. And "SLITHY"?
- HUMPTY** Well, "SLITHY" means "lithe and slimy." "Lithe" is the same as "active." You see it's like a suitcase. There are two meanings packed up into one word.
- ALICE** I see it now. And what are "Toves"?
- HUMPTY** Well, "Toves" are something like badgers, they're something like lizards, and they're something like corkscrews.
- ALICE** They must be very curious looking creatures.
- HUMPTY** They are that. Also they make their nests under sun-dials, also they live on cheese.
- ALICE** And what's the "Gyre" and to "Gimble"?
- HUMPTY** To "Gyre" is to go round and round like a gyroscope. To "Gimble" is to make holes like a gimlet.
- ALICE** And "The wabe" is the grass-plot round a sun-dial, I suppose?
- HUMPTY** Of course it is. It's called "Wabe," you know, because it goes a long way before it, and a long way behind it.
- ALICE** And a long way beyond it on each side.
- HUMPTY** Exactly so. Well, then, "MIMSY" is "flimsy and miserable" (there's another suitcase for you.) And a "BOROGOVE" is a thin shabby-looking bird with its feathers sticking out all round, something like a live mop.
- ALICE** And then "Mome raths"?

- HUMPTY** Well, a "Rath" is a sort of green pig: but "Mome" I'm not certain about. I think it's short for "from home", meaning that they'd lost their way, you know.
- ALICE** And what does "OUTGRABE" mean?
- HUMPTY** Well, "OUTGRABING" is something between bellowing and whistling, with a kind of sneeze in the middle: however, you'll hear it done, maybe, down in the wood yonder, and when you've once heard it, you'll be quite content. Who's been repeating all that hard stuff to you?
- ALICE** I read it in a book. But I had some poetry repeated to me, much easier than that, by, Tweedledee, I think it was.
- HUMPTY** As to poetry, you know, I can repeat poetry as well as other folk, if it comes to that.
- ALICE** Oh, it needn't come to that!
- HUMPTY** The piece I'm going to repeat was written entirely for your amusement.
- ALICE** (*sadly*) Thank you.
- HUMPTY** In winter, when the fields are white,
I sing this song for your delight
--only I don't sing it.
- ALICE** I see you don't.
- HUMPTY** If you can see whether I'm singing or not, you've sharper eyes than most.
In spring, when woods are getting green,
I'll try and tell you what I mean.
- ALICE** Thank you very much.
- HUMPTY** In summer, when the days are long,
perhaps you'll understand the song:
In autumn, when the leaves are brown,
take pen and ink, and write it down.
- ALICE** I will, if I can remember it so long.
- HUMPTY** You needn't go on making remarks like that.
They're not sensible, and they put me out.
I sent a message to the fish: I told them
"This is what I wish."
The little fishes of the sea,

they sent an answer back to me.

The little fishes' answer was,

"We cannot do it, Sir, because,

ALICE I'm afraid I don't quite understand,' said Alice.

HUMPTY It gets easier further on.

I sent to them again to say,

"It will be better to obey."

The fishes answered with a grin,

"Why, what a temper you are in!"

I told them once, I told them twice:

They would not listen to advice.

I took a kettle large and new,

fit for the deed I had to do.

My heart went hop, my heart went thump;

I filled the kettle at the pump.

Then some one came to me and said,

"The little fishes are in bed."

I said to him, I said it plain,

"Then you must wake them up again."

I said it very loud and clear;

I went and shouted in his ear.

ALICE I wouldn't have been the messenger for anything!

HUMPTY But he was very stiff and proud;

He said "You needn't shout so loud!"

And he was very proud and stiff;

He said "I'd go and wake them, if, "

I took a corkscrew from the shelf:

I went to wake them up myself.

And when I found the door was locked,

I pulled and pushed and kicked and knocked.

And when I found the door was shut,

I tried to turn the handle, but...

Pause

ALICE Is that all?

HUMPTY That's all. Good-bye.

ALICE Good-bye, till we meet again!

HUMPTY I shouldn't know you again if we did meet. You're so exactly like other people.

ALICE The face is what one goes by, generally.

HUMPTY That's just what I complain of. Your face is the same as everybody has, the two eyes, nose in the middle, mouth under. It's always the same. Now if you had the two eyes on the same side of the nose, for instance, or the mouth at the top, that would be some help.

ALICE It wouldn't look nice.

HUMPTY Wait till you've tried.

ALICE Good-bye! Well, of all the unsatisfactory people I ever met...

Crash from off stage

NARRATOR The next moment soldiers came running through the wood, at first in twos and threes, then ten or twenty together, and at last in such crowds that they seemed to fill the whole forest. Alice got behind a tree, for fear of being run over, and watched them go by. They were always tripping over something or other, and whenever one went down, several more always fell over him, so that the ground was soon covered with little heaps of men. Then came the horses. Having four feet, these managed rather better than the foot-soldiers: but even they stumbled now and then; and it seemed to be a regular rule that, whenever a horse stumbled the rider fell off instantly.

W KNIGHT I've sent them all! Did you happen to meet any soldiers, my dear, as you came through the wood?

ALICE Yes, I did. Several thousand, I should think.

W KNIGHT Four thousand two hundred and seven, that's the exact number. I couldn't send all the horses, you know, because two of them are wanted in the game. And I haven't sent the two Messengers, either. They're both gone to the town. Just look along the road, and tell me if you can see either of them.

ALICE I see nobody on the road.

W KNIGHT I only wish I had such eyes. To be able to see Nobody! And at that distance, too! Why, it's as much as I can do to see real people, by this light!

- ALICE** I see somebody now! But he's coming very slowly, and what curious attitudes he goes into! He's skipping up and down, and wriggling like an eel, with his hands spread out like fans on each side.
- W KNIGHT** Not at all. He's an Anglo-Saxon Messenger and those are Anglo-Saxon attitudes. He only does them when he's happy. His name is Haigha.
(rhymes with mayor.)
- ALICE** I love my love with an H, because he is Happy. I hate him with an H, because he is Hideous. I fed him with—with--with Ham-sandwiches and Hay. His name is Haigha, and he lives...
- W KNIGHT** He lives on the Hill. The other Messenger's called Hatta. I must have two, you know, to come and go. One to come, and one to go.
- ALICE** I beg your pardon?
- W KNIGHT** It isn't respectable to beg.
- ALICE** I only meant that I didn't understand. Why one to come and one to go?
- W KNIGHT** Didn't I tell you? I must have Two, to fetch and carry. One to fetch, and one to carry.
HAIGHA panting, out of breath
- W KNIGHT** This young lady loves you with an H.
HAIGHA pants violently
- You alarm me! I feel faint! Give me a ham sandwich!
- NARRATOR** On which the Messenger, to Alice's great amusement, opened a bag that hung round his neck, and handed a sandwich to the King, who devoured it greedily.
- W KNIGHT** Another sandwich!
- HAIGHA** There's nothing but hay left now.
- W KNIGHT** Hay, then. There's nothing like eating hay when you're faint.
- ALICE** I should think throwing cold water over you would be better.
- W KNIGHT** I didn't say there was nothing better, I said there was nothing like it. Who did you pass on the road?
- HAIGHA** Nobody.

- W KNIGHT** Quite right, this young lady saw him too. So, of course, Nobody walks slower than you.
- HAIGHA** I do my best. I'm sure nobody walks much faster than I do!
- W KNIGHT** He can't do that, or else he'd have been here first. However, now you've got your breath, you may tell us what's happened in the town.
- HAIGHA** I'll whisper it. (*shouting*) They're at it again!
- W KNIGHT** Do you call that a whisper? If you do such a thing again, I'll have you buttered! It went through and through my head like an earthquake!
- ALICE** It would have to be a very tiny earthquake! Who are at it again?
- W KNIGHT** Why, the Lion and the Unicorn.
- ALICE** Fighting for the crown?
- W KNIGHT** Yes, to be sure. And the best of the joke is, that it's my crown all the while! Let's run and see them.
- Runs off*
- ALICE** It's like that poem.
 The Lion and the Unicorn were fighting for the crown.
 The Lion beat the Unicorn all round the town.
 Some gave them white bread, some gave them brown;
 Some gave them plum-cake and drummed them out of town.
 Does the one that wins get the crown?
- W KNIGHT** Dear me, no! What an idea! Ah! Here they are!
- HAIGA** There's Messenger Hatta! He's only just out of prison, and he hadn't finished his tea when he was sent in, and they only give them oyster-shells in there so you see he's very hungry and thirsty. How are you, dear child? (*pause*) Were you happy in prison, dear child? (*pause*) Speak, can't you!
- W KNIGHT** Speak, won't you! How are they getting on with the fight?
- HATTA** (*mouth full*) They're getting on very well. Each of them has been down about eighty-seven times.
- ALICE** Then I suppose they'll soon bring the white bread and the brown?
- HATTA** It's waiting for 'em now. This is a bit of it as I'm eating.

- W KNIGHT** Ten minutes allowed for refreshments! I don't think they'll fight any more to-day. Hatta, go and order the drums to begin.
- ALICE** Look, look! There's the White Queen running across the country! She came flying out of the wood. How fast those Queens can run!
- W KNIGHT** There's some enemy after her, no doubt. That wood's full of them.
- ALICE** But aren't you going to run and help her?
- W KNIGHT** No use, no use! She runs so fearfully quick. You might as well try to catch a Bandersnatch! But I'll make a note about her, if you like, She's a dear good creature. Do you spell "creature" with a double "e"?
- UNICORN** I had the best of it this time?
- W KNIGHT** A little, Sir Unicorn, a little. You shouldn't have run him through with your horn, you know.
- UNICORN** It didn't hurt him. What, is, this?
- HAIGHA** This is a child! We only found it to-day. It's as large as life, and twice as natural!
- UNICORN** I always thought they were fabulous monsters! Is it alive?
- HAIGHA** It can talk.
- UNICORN** Talk, child.
- ALICE** Do you know, I always thought Unicorns were fabulous monsters, too! I never saw one alive before!
- UNICORN** Well, now that we have seen each other, if you'll believe in me, I'll believe in you. Is that a bargain?
- ALICE** Yes, if you like.
- UNICORN** Come, fetch out the plum-cake, old man! None of your brown bread for me!
- W KNIGHT** Certainly, certainly! Open the bag! Quick! Not that one, that's full of hay!
- LION** What's this!
- UNICORN** Ah, what is it, now, Sir Lion? You'll never guess! I couldn't.
- LION** Are you animal, vegetable, or mineral?
- UNICORN** It's a fabulous monster!

- LION** Then hand round the plum-cake, Monster. And sit down, both of you. Fair play with the cake, you know!
- UNICORN** What a fight we might have for the crown, now!
- LION** I should win easy.
- UNICORN** I'm not so sure of that.
- LION** Why, I beat you all round the town, you chicken!
- W KNIGHT** All round the town? That's a good long way. Did you go by the old bridge, or the market-place? You get the best view by the old bridge.
- LION** I'm sure I don't know. There was too much dust to see anything. What a time the Monster is having, cutting up that cake!
- ALICE** It's very provoking! I've cut several slices already, but they always join together again!
- UNICORN** You don't know how to manage Looking-glass cakes. Hand it round first, and cut it afterwards.
- LION** Now cut it up.
- UNICORN** I say, this isn't fair! The Monster has given the Lion twice as much as me!
- LION** She's kept none for herself, anyhow. Do you like plum-cake, Monster?
- Drums from off stage*
- ALICE** If that doesn't "drum them out of town," nothing ever will!
- NARRATOR** After a while the noise seemed gradually to die away, till all was dead silence, and Alice lifted up her head in some alarm. There was no one to be seen, and her first thought was that she must have been dreaming about the Lion and the Unicorn and those strange Messengers. However, there was the great dish still lying at her feet, on which she had tried to cut the plum-cake.
- ALICE** So I wasn't dreaming, after all. Unless, unless we're all part of the same dream. Only I do hope it's my dream, and not the Red King's! I don't like belonging to another person's dream. I've a great mind to go and wake him, and see what happens!
- R KNIGHT** Ahoy! Ahoy! Check! You're my prisoner!

W KNIGHT Ahoy! Ahoy! Check!
R KNIGHT She's my prisoner, you know!
W KNIGHT Yes, but then I came and rescued her!
R KNIGHT Well, we must fight for her, then.
W KNIGHT You will observe the Rules of Battle, of course?
R KNIGHT I always do.

BATTLE

ALICE I wonder what the Rules of Battle are. One Rule seems to be, that if one Knight hits the other, he knocks him off his horse, and if he misses, he tumbles off himself, and another Rule seems to be that they hold their clubs with their arms, as if they were Punch and Judy. What a noise they make when they tumble! Just like a whole set of fire-irons falling into the fender! And how quiet the horses are! They let them get on and off them just as if they were tables!

NARRATOR Another Rule of Battle, that Alice had not noticed, seemed to be that they always fell on their heads, and the battle ended with their both falling off in this way, side by side: when they got up again, they shook hands, and then the Red Knight mounted and galloped off.

W KNIGHT It was a glorious victory, wasn't it?
ALICE I don't know. I don't want to be anybody's prisoner. I want to be a Queen.

W KNIGHT So you will, when you've crossed the next brook. I'll see you safe to the end of the wood, and then I must go back, you know. That's the end of my move.

ALICE Thank you very much. May I help you off with your helmet?

W KNIGHT Now one can breathe more easily.

NARRATOR Alice had never seen such a strange-looking soldier in all her life. He was dressed in tin armour, which seemed to fit him very badly, and he had a little box fastened across his shoulder, upside-down, and with the lid hanging open. Alice looked at it with great curiosity.

- W KNIGHT** I see you're admiring my little box. It's my own invention, to keep clothes and sandwiches in. You see I carry it upside-down, so that the rain can't get in.
- ALICE** But the things can get out. Do you know the lid's open?
- W KNIGHT** I didn't know it. Then all the things must have fallen out! And the box is no use without them. I shall hang it in this tree. Can you guess why I did that? In hopes some bees may make a nest in it, then I should get the honey.
- ALICE** But you've got a bee-hive, or something like one, fastened to the saddle.
- W KNIGHT** Yes, it's a very good bee-hive, one of the best kind. But not a single bee has come near it yet. And the other thing is a mouse-trap. I suppose the mice keep the bees out, or the bees keep the mice out, I don't know which.
- ALICE** I was wondering what the mouse-trap was for. It isn't very likely there would be any mice on the horse's back.
- W KNIGHT** Not very likely, perhaps. But if they do come, I don't choose to have them running all about. You see, it's as well to be provided for everything. That's the reason the horse has all those anklets round his feet.
- ALICE** But what are they for?
- W KNIGHT** To guard against the bites of sharks. It's an invention of my own. And now help me on. I'll go with you to the end of the wood. What's the dish for?
- ALICE** It's meant for plum-cake.
- W KNIGHT** We'd better take it with us. It'll come in handy if we find any plum-cake. Help me to get it into this bag. It's rather a tight fit, you see. There are so many candlesticks in the bag. That will do. Let's ride! I hope you've got your hair well fastened on?
- ALICE** Only in the usual way.

- W KNIGHT** That's hardly enough. You see the wind is so very strong here. It's as strong as soup.
- ALICE** Have you invented a plan for keeping the hair from being blown off?
- W KNIGHT** Not yet. But I've got a plan for keeping it from falling off.
- ALICE** I should like to hear it, very much.
- W KNIGHT** First you take an upright stick. Then you make your hair creep up it, like a fruit-tree. Now the reason hair falls off is because it hangs down. Things never fall upwards, you know. It's a plan of my own invention. You may try it if you like.
- NARRATOR** Whenever the horse stopped (which it did very often), the poor Knight fell off in front; and whenever it went on again (which it generally did rather suddenly), he fell off behind. Otherwise he kept on pretty well, except that he had a habit of now and then falling off sideways; and as he generally did this on the side on which Alice was walking, she soon found that it was the best plan not to walk quite close to the horse.
- ALICE** I'm afraid you've not had much practice in riding.
- W KNIGHT** What makes you say that?
- ALICE** Because people don't fall off quite so often, when they've had much practice.
- W KNIGHT** I've had plenty of practice. Plenty of practice! The great art of riding, is to keep...
- NARRATOR** Here the sentence ended as suddenly as it had begun, as the Knight fell heavily on the top of his head exactly in the path where Alice was walking.
- ALICE** I hope no bones are broken?
- W KNIGHT** None to speak of. The great art of riding, as I was saying, is, to keep your balance properly. Like this, you know. (*Crashes off the horse*) Plenty of practice! Plenty of practice!
- ALICE** It's too ridiculous! You should have a wooden horse on wheels!
- W KNIGHT** Does that kind go smoothly?
- ALICE** Much more smoothly than a live horse.

- W KNIGHT** I'll get one. One or two. Several. I'm a great hand at inventing things. Now, I daresay you noticed, that last time you picked me up, that I was looking rather thoughtful? Well, just then I was inventing a new way of getting over a gate, would you like to hear it?
- ALICE** Very much indeed.
- W KNIGHT** I'll tell you how I came to think of it. You see, I said to myself, "The only difficulty is with the feet: the head is high enough already." Now, first I put my head on the top of the gate, then I stand on my head, then the feet are high enough, you see, then I'm over, you see.
- ALICE** Yes, I suppose you'd be over when that was done, but don't you think it would be rather hard?
- W KNIGHT** I haven't tried it yet. So I can't tell for certain, but I'm afraid it would be a little hard.
- ALICE** What a curious helmet you've got! Is that your invention too?
- W KNIGHT** Yes, but I've invented a better one than that, like a sugar loaf. When I used to wear it, if I fell off the horse, it always touched the ground directly. So I had a very little way to fall, you see, But there was the danger of falling into it, to be sure. That happened to me once, and the worst of it was, before I could get out again, the other White Knight came and put it on. He thought it was his own helmet.
- ALICE** I'm afraid you must have hurt him, being on the top of his head.
- W KNIGHT** I had to kick him, of course. And then he took the helmet off again, but it took hours and hours to get me out. I was as fast as, as lightning, you know.
- ALICE** But that's a different kind of fastness.
- W KNIGHT** It was all kinds of fastness with me, I can assure you! (*crashes off the horse*) But it was careless of him to put another man's helmet on, with the man in it, too.

- ALICE** How can you go on talking so quietly, head downwards?
- W KNIGHT** What does it matter where my body happens to be? My mind goes on working all the same. In fact, the more head downwards I am, the more I keep inventing new things. Now the cleverest thing of the sort that I ever did was inventing a new pudding. And here I must leave you. We have come to the end of the wood. (*pause*) You are sad. Let me sing you a song to comfort you.
- ALICE** Is it very long?
- W KNIGHT** It's long, but very, very beautiful. Everybody that hears me sing it, either it brings the tears into their eyes, or else...
- ALICE** Or else what?
- W KNIGHT** Or else it doesn't, you know. The name of the song is called "Haddocks' eyes."
- ALICE** Oh, that's the name of the song, is it?
- W KNIGHT** No, you don't understand. That's what the name is called. The name really is "The aged aged man."
- ALICE** Then I should have said "That's what the song is called"?
- W KNIGHT** No, that's quite another thing! The song is called "Ways and means": but that's only what it's called, you know!
- ALICE** Well, what is the song, then?
- W KNIGHT** I was coming to that. The song really is "A-sitting on A gate": and the tune's my own invention.
- I'll tell thee everything I can; There's little to relate.
 I saw an aged, aged man, A-sitting on a gate.
 "Who are you, aged man?" I said, "and how is it you live?"
 And his answer trickled through my head like water through a sieve.
- He said "I look for butterflies That sleep among the wheat:
 I make them into mutton-pies, and sell them in the street.
 I sell them unto men," he said, "Who sail on stormy seas;
 And that's the way I get my bread A trifle, if you please."
 But I was thinking of a plan to dye one's whiskers green,
 And always use so large a fan that they could not be seen.

So, having no reply to give to what the old man said,
I cried, "Come, tell me how you live!" and thumped him on
the head.

He said "I hunt for haddocks' eyes among the heather bright,
And work them into waistcoat-buttons in the silent night.
And these I do not sell for gold or coin of silvery shine
But for a copper halfpenny, and that will purchase nine.
And now, if e'er by chance I put my fingers into glue
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe a very heavy weight,

I weep, for it reminds me so, of that old man I used to know,
You've only a few yards to go, down the hill and
over that little brook, and then you'll be a Queen,
But you'll stay and see me off first? I shan't be
long. You'll wait and wave until I get to that turn in
the road? I think it'll encourage me, you see.

ALICE Of course I'll wait, and thank you very much for
coming so far, and for the song, I liked it very
much.

W KNIGHT I hope so, but you didn't cry so much as I thought
you would. Goodbye! (*crashes off horse*)

ALICE There he goes! Right on his head as usual!
However, he gets on again pretty easily, that comes
of having so many things hung round the horse. I
hope it encouraged him. And now for the last
brook, and to be a Queen! How grand it sounds!
The Eighth Square at last! Oh, how glad I am to
get here! And what is this on my head? It's a
golden crown! Well, this is grand! I never expected
I should be a Queen so soon, and I'll tell you what
it is, your majesty. It'll never do for you to be
lolling about on the grass like that! Queens have to
be dignified, you know!

NARRATOR Everything was happening so oddly that she didn't
feel a bit surprised at finding the Red Queen and
the White Queen sitting close to her, one on each
side: she would have liked very much to ask them
how they came there, but she feared it would not
be polite.

- ALICE** Please, would you tell me...
- RED QUEEN** Speak when you're spoken to!
- ALICE** But if everybody obeyed that rule, and if you only spoke when you were spoken to, and the other person always waited for you to begin, you see nobody would ever say anything, so that...
- RED QUEEN** Ridiculous! Why, don't you see, child...What do you mean by "If you really are a Queen"? What right have you to call yourself so? You can't be a Queen, you know, till you've passed the proper examination. And the sooner we begin it, the better.
- ALICE** I only said "if"!
- RED QUEEN** She says she only said "if."
- W QUEEN** But she said a great deal more than that! Oh, ever so much more than that!
- RED QUEEN** So you did, you know. Always speak the truth, think before you speak, and write it down afterwards.
- ALICE** I'm sure I didn't mean...
- RED QUEEN** That's just what I complain of! You should have meant! What do you suppose is the use of child without any meaning? Even a joke should have some meaning, and a child's more important than a joke, I hope. You couldn't deny that, even if you tried with both hands.
- ALICE** I don't deny things with my hands.
- RED QUEEN** Nobody said you did. I said you couldn't if you tried.
- W QUEEN** She's in that state of mind that she wants to deny something, only she doesn't know what to deny!'
- RED QUEEN** A nasty, vicious temper. I invite you to Alice's dinner-party this afternoon.
- W QUEEN** And I invite you.
- ALICE** I didn't know I was to have a party at all, but if there is one, I think I should invite the guests.'
- RED QUEEN** We gave you the opportunity of doing it, but I daresay you've not had many lessons in manners yet?

- ALICE** Manners are not taught in lessons. Lessons teach you to do sums, and things of that sort.
- W QUEEN** And you do Addition? What's one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one?
- ALICE** I don't know. I lost count.
- RED QUEEN** She can't do Addition. Can you do Subtraction? Take nine from eight.
- ALICE** Nine from eight? I can't, you know, but...
- W QUEEN** She can't do Subtraction. Can you do Division? Divide a loaf by a knife, what's the answer to that?
- ALICE** I suppose...
- RED QUEEN** Bread-and-butter, of course. Try another Subtraction sum. Take a bone from a dog: what remains?
- ALICE** The bone wouldn't remain, of course, if I took it, and the dog wouldn't remain; it would come to bite me, and I'm sure I shouldn't remain!
- RED QUEEN** Then you think nothing would remain?
- ALICE** I think that's the answer.
- RED QUEEN** Wrong, as usual. The dog's temper would remain.
- ALICE** But I don't see how...
- RED QUEEN** Why, look here! The dog would lose its temper, wouldn't it?
- ALICE** Perhaps it would.
- RED QUEEN** Then if the dog went away, its temper would remain!
- ALICE** They might go different ways. What dreadful nonsense we are talking!
- W QUEEN** She can't do sums a bit!
- ALICE** Can you do sums?
- W QUEEN** I can do Addition, if you give me time, but I can do Subtraction, under any circumstances!
- RED QUEEN** Of course, you know your A B C?
- ALICE** To be sure I do.
- W QUEEN** So do I. We'll often say it over together, dear. And I'll tell you a secret. I can read words of one letter! Isn't that grand! However, don't be discouraged. You'll come to it in time.

- RED QUEEN** Can you answer useful questions? How is bread made?
- ALICE** I know that! You take some flour...
- W QUEEN** Where do you pick the flower? In a garden, or in the hedges?
- ALICE** Well, it isn't picked at all, it's ground...
- W QUEEN** How many acres of ground? You mustn't leave out so many things.
- RED QUEEN** Fan her head! She'll be feverish after so much thinking. *(pause)* She's all right again now. Do you know Languages? What's the French for fiddle-de-dee?
- ALICE** Fiddle-de-dee's not English.
- RED QUEEN** Who ever said it was?
- ALICE** If you'll tell me what language "fiddle-de-dee" is, I'll tell you the French for it!
- RED QUEEN** Queens never make bargains.
- ALICE** I wish Queens never asked questions.
- W QUEEN** Don't let us quarrel. What is the cause of lightning?
- ALICE** The cause of lightning is the thunder, no, no! I meant the other way.
- RED QUEEN** It's too late to correct it. When you've once said a thing, that fixes it, and you must take the consequences.
- W QUEEN** Which reminds me, we had such a thunderstorm last Tuesday, I mean one of the last set of Tuesdays, you know.
- ALICE** In our country, there's only one day at a time.
- RED QUEEN** That's a poor way of doing things. Now here, we mostly have days and nights two or three at a time, and sometimes in the winter we take as many as five nights together, for warmth, you know.
- ALICE** Are five nights warmer than one night, then?
- RED QUEEN** Five times as warm, of course.
- ALICE** But they should be five times as cold, by the same rule.

RED QUEEN Just so! Five times as warm, and five times as cold, just as I'm five times as rich as you are, and five times as clever!

ALICE (SIGH) It's exactly like a riddle with no answer!

W QUEEN Humpty Dumpty saw it too. He came to the door with a corkscrew in his hand.

RED QUEEN What did he want?

W QUEEN He said he would come in because he was looking for a hippopotamus. Now, as it happened, there wasn't such a thing in the house, that morning.

ALICE Is there generally?

W QUEEN Well, only on Thursdays.

ALICE I know what he came for. He wanted to punish the fish, because...

W QUEEN It was such a thunderstorm, you can't think!

RED QUEEN She never could, you know.

W QUEEN And part of the roof came off, and ever so much thunder got in, and it went rolling round the room in great lumps, and knocking over the tables and things, till I was so frightened, I couldn't remember my own name!

ALICE I never should try to remember my name in the middle of an accident! Where would be the use of it?

RED QUEEN Your Majesty must excuse her. She means well, but she can't help saying foolish things, as a general rule. She never was really well brought up, but it's amazing how good-tempered she is! Pat her on the head, and see how pleased she'll be! A little kindness, and putting her hair in papers, would do wonders with her.

W QUEEN I am so sleepy...

RED QUEEN She's tired, poor thing! Smooth her hair and sing her a soothing lullaby.

ALICE I don't know any soothing lullabies.

RED QUEEN I must do it myself, then. 'Hush-a-by lady, in Alice's lap! Till the feast's ready, we've time for a nap: When the feast's over, we'll go to the ball Red Queen, and White Queen, and Alice, and all! And

now you know the words. Just sing it through to me. I'm getting sleepy, too.

ALICE What am I to do? I don't think it ever happened before, that anyone had to take care of two Queens asleep at once! No, it couldn't, you know, because there never was more than one Queen at a time. Do wake up, you heavy things!

NARRATOR The snoring got more distinct every minute, and sounded more like a tune: at last she could even make out the words, and she listened so eagerly that, when the two great heads vanished from her lap, she hardly missed them. She was standing before an arched doorway over which were the words queen Alice in large letters, and on each side of the arch there was a bell-handle; one was marked 'Visitors' Bell,' and the other 'Servants' Bell.'

ALICE I'll wait till the song's over, and then I'll ring, the, which bell must I ring? I'm not a visitor, and I'm not a servant. There ought to be one marked "Queen," you know.

FROG (*opens the door*) No admittance till the week after next! (*closes the door*)

ALICE knocks

What is it, now?

ALICE Where's the servant who answers the door?

FROG Which door?

ALICE This door, of course!

FROG To answer the door? What's it been asking?

ALICE I don't know what you mean.

FROG I talks English, doesn't I? Or are you deaf? What did it ask you?

ALICE Nothing! I've been knocking at it!

FROG Shouldn't do that, shouldn't do that. Vexes it, you know. You let it alone, and it'll let you alone, you know. (*opens the door*)

NARRATOR Alice glanced nervously along the table, as she walked up the large hall, and noticed that there were about fifty guests, of all kinds: some were

animals, some birds, and there were even a few flowers among them.

ALICE I'm glad they've come without waiting to be asked. I should never have known who were the right people to invite!

RED QUEEN You've missed the soup and fish. Bring out the chicken! You look a little shy; let me introduce you to that chicken leg. Alice, chicken leg. Chicken leg, Alice.

ALICE May I have a slice?

RED QUEEN Certainly not. It isn't polite to cut any one you've been introduced to. Remove the chicken!

ALICE I won't be introduced to the rest of the food, please, or I'll get no dinner at all.

RED QUEEN Well, it's ridiculous to leave all the conversation to the food!

ALICE Do you know, I've had a lot of poetry repeated to me today, and it's a very weird, I think, that every poem was about fishes in some way. Do you know why they're so fond of fishes around here?

RED QUEEN As to fishes, her White Majesty knows a lovely riddle, all in poetry, all about fishes. Shall she repeat it?

W QUEEN Her Red Majesty's very kind to mention it. It would be such a treat! May I?

ALICE Please do.

W QUEEN "First, the fish must be caught."

That is easy: a baby, I think, could have caught it.

"Next, the fish must be bought."

That is easy: a penny, I think, would have bought it.

"Now cook me the fish!"

That is easy, and will not take more than a minute.

"Let it lie in a dish!"

That is easy, because it already is in it.

"Bring it here! Let me sup!"

It is easy to set such a dish on the table.

"Take the dish-cover up!"

Ah, that is so hard that I fear I'm unable!

For it holds it like glue

Holds the lid to the dish, while it lies in the middle:
Which is easiest to do,

Un-dish-cover the fish, or dishcover the riddle?

RED QUEEN Take a minute to think about it, and then guess.
Meanwhile, we'll drink your health, Queen Alice's health!

cheers

You ought to return thanks in a neat speech.

W QUEEN We must support you, you know.

ALICE Thank you very much, but I can do quite well without. I rise to return thanks...

NARRATOR And she really did rise as she spoke, several inches; but she got hold of the edge of the table, and managed to pull herself down again.

W QUEEN Take care of yourself! Something's going to happen!

NARRATOR And then the candles all grew up to the ceiling, looking something like a bed of rushes with fireworks at the top. As to the bottles, they each took a pair of plates, which they hastily fitted on as wings, and so, with forks for legs, went fluttering about in all directions.

ALICE And very like birds they look. I can't stand this any longer!

NARRATOR She jumped up and seized the table-cloth with both hands: one good pull, and plates, dishes, guests, and candles came crashing down together in a heap on the floor.

ALICE As for you, your Red majesty, I'll shake you into a kitten, that I will!

NARRATOR The Red Queen made no resistance whatever; only her face grew very small, and her eyes got large and green: and still, as Alice went on shaking her, she kept on growing shorter, and fatter, and softer, and rounder, and...and it really was a kitten, after all.

ALICE Your majesty shouldn't purr so loud. You woke me out of oh! such a nice dream! And you've been

along with me, Kitty, all through the
Looking-Glass world.

NARRATOR Children yet, the tale to hear,

Eager eye and willing ear,
Lovingly shall nestle near.
In a Wonderland they lie,
Dreaming as the days go by,
Dreaming as the summers die:
Ever drifting down the stream
Lingering in the golden gleam
Life, what is it but a dream?