

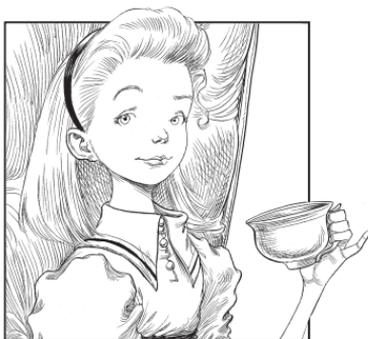
PUFFIN  CLASSICS

*Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland*

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, 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.

LEWIS CARROLL

*Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland*



INTRODUCED BY
CHRIS RIDDELL

Illustrations by JOHN TENNIEL



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INTRODUCTION BY CHRIS RIDDELL

“What is the use of a book,” thought Alice, “without pictures or conversation?”

If you feel the same way, then you’ll love *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. It is full of great conversations. Alice talks to a pipe-smoking caterpillar sitting on a magic mushroom, a sneezing Duchess nursing a baby pig, and a mad Hatter, a March Hare and a Dormouse at a tea-party. My favourite conversation is the one Alice has with a tearful Mock Turtle.

“When we were little,” the Mock Turtle went on at last, more calmly, though still sobbing a little now and then, “we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle – we used to call him Tortoise –”

“Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn’t one?” Alice asked.

“We called him Tortoise because he taught us,” said the Mock Turtle angrily: “really you are very dull!”

Just as good as the conversations are the pictures. These

were drawn by a famous political cartoonist called John Tenniel and they bring the strange world of Wonderland vividly to life. There are lizards flying out of chimney pots, fat men doing amazing somersaults, frogs dressed as footmen and a large Cheshire Cat with a huge grin. My favourite illustration in the whole book is the very first. It shows the White Rabbit looking at his pocket-watch, worrying that it's late. I copied that White Rabbit hundreds of times in my sketchbooks, trying to capture the worried expression in his eye, the folds of his coat and the wonderful shading at his feet.

It all began on 4 July 1862, when a young Oxford mathematics lecturer called Charles Dodgson and a friend rowed three children up the Thames from Oxford to Godstow for a picnic. I walked to the same spot and it is a magical place, but I didn't see any white rabbits in waistcoats. It was different a hundred and fifty years ago when Dodgson had his picnic. 'On which occasion,' he wrote in his diary, 'I told them the fairy-tale of "Alice's Adventures Underground"'. The youngest of the three children, Alice Liddell, exclaimed at the end of the outing as they returned to Oxford, 'Oh, Mr Dodgson, I wish you would write out Alice's Adventures for me!' So he did.

That picnic fairy-tale was *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which, together with Tenniel's unforgettable illustrations, went on to become one of the most famous children's books in the world. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson

chose his pen-name by taking his Christian names and translating them into Latin before reversing the order and turning them back into English. So Charles Lutwidge became Carolus Ludovicus, which, reversed, became Lewis Carroll. It is just like something out of Wonderland.

When I was nine, I was thrilled when it was announced that the school play that year was to be an adaptation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Of course, I auditioned for the part of the White Rabbit, with his umbrella and pocket-watch and fabulous long white ears. I was devastated when I didn't get the part. I soon cheered up, though, when I was cast as the March Hare. I still got to wear some wonderfully long ears and although I didn't have an umbrella or pocket-watch, I did get to eat cake – lots of it at the tea-party! After all, what is the use of a school play, I always say, without large ears and cake?

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The text of this edition of *Alice in Wonderland* is that of the first edition. A few verbal changes were made in later editions, but these were of minor importance, with one exception. The verses on pages 116 and 118 were later expanded, and the full version known to all Alice-lovers is as follows:

*'Tis the voice of the Lobster; I heard him declare,
'You have baked me too brown, I must sugar my hair.'
As a duck with its eyelids, so he with his nose
Trims his belt and his buttons, and turns out his toes.
When the sands are all dry, he is gay as a lark,
And will talk in contemptuous tones of the Shark.
But, when the tide rises and sharks are around,
His voice has a timid and tremulous sound.*

*I passed by his garden, and marked, with one eye,
How the Owl and the Panther were sharing a pie.*

*The Panther took pie-crust, and gravy, and meat,
While the Owl had the dish as its share of the treat.
When the pie was all finished, the Owl, as a boon,
Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon:
While the Panther received knife and fork with a growl,
And concluded the banquet –*

All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three! In such an hour,
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict 'to begin it' –
In gentler tone Secunda hopes
'There will be nonsense in it!' –
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not *more* than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast –
And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
'The rest next time –' 'It *is* next time!
The happy voices cry.

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out –
And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.

Alice! a childish story take,
And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
In Memory's mystic band,
Like pilgrim's wither'd wreath of flowers
Pluck'd in a far-off land.



1

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 conversation?’

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 too 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 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, 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.)

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 downwards! 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 curtsy 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.

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.

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.



‘What a curious feeling!’ said Alice. ‘I must be shutting up like a telescope.’

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!’

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.

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

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