

# Alice's Adventures In Wonderland

## Scene 1

Narrator 1: Alice is sitting by her sister on a riverbank. She is very tired and has nothing to do.

Occasionally, she peeps into the book her sister is reading. But she finds no interest in a book with no pictures or conversations in it.

Narrator 2: Suddenly, a White Rabbit with pink eyes runs close by her. The White Rabbit takes a watch out of his waistcoat pocket.

Alice: How curious!

White Rabbit: Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I shall be too late!

Narrator 3: The White Rabbit runs across the field, and Alice chases it all the way to a large rabbit hole.

Alice crawls in after the White Rabbit.

Narrator 4: The rabbit hole goes straight on like a tunnel and then dips suddenly down into a well.

Alice has only a moment to think of stopping herself from going forward, but it is not enough time.

She falls down the hole. She falls

and falls ... and falls and falls ... and falls.

Alice: Well! After such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of falling down stairs!

Narr 1: Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end?

Alice: I wonder how many miles I've fallen? I must be getting somewhere near the center of the earth. I wonder if I should fall right through to the other side! How funny it would be to come out among the people that walk with their heads downward. 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?

Narr 2: Alice tries to curtsy. Imagine trying to curtsy as you're falling through the air!

Narr 3: Finally, Alice comes down upon a heap of dry leaves, and the fall is over. She jumps up onto her feet and chases the White Rabbit down another long passage.

White Rabbit: Oh, my ears and

By Lewis Carroll

Adapted by Bryon Cahill

## Characters

(main characters in bold)

**Narrators 1, 2, 3, 4**

**Alice**

White Rabbit

**Caterpillar**

Pigeon

The Duchess

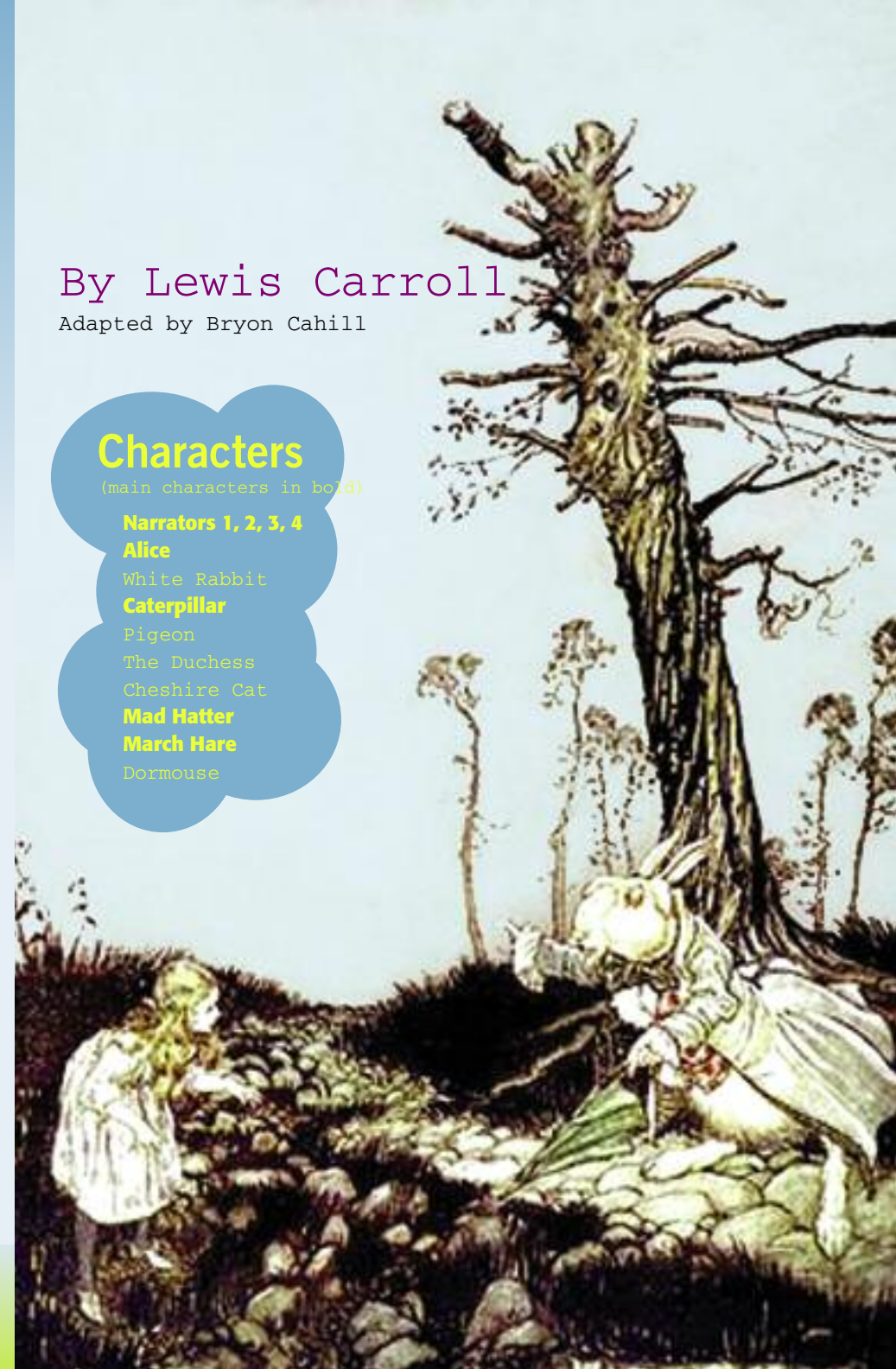
Cheshire Cat

**Mad Hatter**

**March Hare**

Dormouse

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whiskers! How late it's getting!

Narr 4: Alice comes to a three-legged table made of solid glass. On the table is a tiny golden key. Below the table is a very tiny door. She tries the key, and the door opens. She kneels down and peeps through the tiny door. Through the door is the loveliest garden you ever saw!

Alice: Even if I could get my head through this tiny door, it would be very little use without my shoulders.

Narr 1: Alice stands up again and notices a little bottle on the table.

Alice: This certainly wasn't here before!

Narr 2: There is a label on the bottle that says DRINK ME.

Alice: No, first I'll look to see whether it's marked poison.

Narr 3: On finding that the bottle is not marked poison, Alice ventures to taste it.

Alice: What a curious feeling! I must be shutting up like a telescope!

Narr 4: And so it is indeed! Alice has shrunk to only 10 inches tall. She is the perfect height for fitting through the door! But alas, the door has shut and is locked again, and poor Alice has forgotten the key way up there on the tabletop.

Narr 1: Alice sits down on the floor and begins to cry.

Alice: Come, there's no use crying like that!

Narr 2: Alice generally gives herself very good advice—though she very seldom follows it.

Composing herself, Alice's eyes fall upon a little glass box lying under the table. She reaches for it and opens it. Inside is a very small cake with the words EAT ME inscribed in frosting.

Alice: Well, I'll eat it. If it makes me larger, I can reach the key. And if it makes me smaller, I can creep under the door. So either way, I'll get into the garden, and I don't care what happens!

Narr 3: Alice eats a little bit of the cake and immediately shoots up to her normal height—and past it. Her head hits the roof of the hall and her feet seem a mile away! She can now reach the key, but she is once again much too big to fit through the door. Alice sits down and begins to cry again.

Alice: You ought to be ashamed of yourself crying this way! Stop it this moment, I tell you!

Narr 4: But she carries on just the same, shedding gallons of her giant tears until there is a large pool all around her. As she cries, the White Rabbit returns, splendidly dressed, carrying a large fan.

White Rabbit: Oh! The Duchess, the Duchess! Oh! Won't she be savage if I've kept her waiting!

Alice: If you please, sir—

Narr 1: The White Rabbit stops violently at seeing the giant Alice. He drops his fan and runs away. Alice picks it up and starts fanning herself.

Alice: Dear, dear! How queer every-

thing is today! And yesterday things went on just as usual.

Narr 2: Alice notices that by fanning herself, she has grown smaller. She is now small enough to fit through the door and enter the garden! But the door is locked ... again.

Narr 3: A mouse swims past Alice in her ocean of tears. She swims toward the mouse and he leads her to a nearby shore.

## Scene 2

Narr 4: The entire hall with the glass table and the little door has vanished completely. Dripping wet, Alice reaches the shore and dries off.

Narr 1: She makes her way farther inland, where she comes upon a rather large mushroom. Stretching herself up on tiptoe, Alice peeps over the edge of the mushroom. Her eyes immediately meet those of a large, blue caterpillar, sitting on top with his arms folded, quietly smoking a long pipe.

Caterpillar: Who are you?  
Alice: I—I hardly know, sir. At least, I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.

Caterpillar: What do you mean by that? Explain yourself!

Alice: I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, sir, because I'm not myself, you see.

Caterpillar: I don't see.

Alice: I'm afraid I can't put it more

A mouse swims past Alice in her ocean of tears.



clearly, for I can't understand it myself to begin with, and being so many different sizes in one day is very confusing.

Caterpillar: It isn't.

Alice: Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet. But when you have to turn into a chrysalis and then into a butterfly, I should think you'll feel a little queer, won't you?

Caterpillar: Not a bit.

Alice: Well, perhaps your feelings may be different. All I know is, it



would feel very queer to me.  
Caterpillar: You! Who are you?  
Alice: I think you ought to tell me who you are first!  
Caterpillar: Why?  
Narr 2: Alice cannot think of any good reason. And as the Caterpillar seems to be in a very unpleasant state of mind, she turns away.  
Caterpillar: Come back! I've something important to say!  
Narr 3: As this sounds promising, Alice returns.  
Caterpillar: Keep your temper.  
Alice: Is that all?  
Caterpillar: What size do you want to be?  
Alice: I don't know.  
Caterpillar: Are you content now?  
Alice: Well, I should like to be a little larger, sir. Three inches is such a wretched height to be.  
Caterpillar: It is a very good height indeed! I am exactly 3 inches high!  
Alice: But I'm not used to it! (to herself) Oh, I wish the creatures wouldn't be so easily offended!  
Caterpillar: You'll get used to it in time.  
Narr 4: The Caterpillar takes the pipe out of his mouth, climbs down off his mushroom, and begins to crawl away.  
Caterpillar: One side will make you grow taller, and the other side will make you grow shorter.  
Alice: One side of what? The other side of what?  
Caterpillar: Of the mushroom, of course.

**'Well, I should like to be a *little* larger, sir. Three inches is such a wretched height to be.'**

Narr 1: The Caterpillar crawls away, and Alice is left to decide which side of the mushroom is which. She eats a piece from one side, and her chin instantly hits her foot. She then takes a bite of the other side and instantly shoots up into the trees. Her head is now high above the treetops, and she cannot even see her hands in the branches.  
Narr 2: A pigeon flies into Alice's face and beats violently at her with its wings.  
Pigeon: Serpent!  
Alice: I'm not a serpent! Let me alone!  
Pigeon: Serpent, I say again! I've tried every way, and nothing seems to suit them!  
Alice: I haven't the least idea what you're talking about.  
Pigeon: I've tried the roots of trees, and I've tried banks, and I've tried hedges, but those serpents! There's no pleasing them! As if it wasn't trouble enough hatching the eggs, but I must look out for serpents night and day! Why, I haven't



had a wink of sleep these three weeks!  
Alice: I'm very sorry you've been annoyed. But I'm not a serpent, I tell you! I'm a—I'm a—  
Pigeon: Well, what are you?  
Alice: I'm a little girl.  
Pigeon: Little? I've seen a good many little girls in my time, but never one with such a neck as that! No, no! You're a serpent! There's no use denying it. I suppose you'll be telling me next that you've never

tasted an egg?  
Alice: I have tasted eggs, certainly. But little girls are supposed to eat eggs quite as much as serpents do, you know.  
Pigeon: I don't believe it. But if they do, why, then, they're a kind of serpent!  
Narr 3: Alice thinks this over for a minute or two.  
Pigeon: You're looking for eggs, I know that well enough. And what does it matter to me whether you're

a little girl or a serpent?

Alice: It matters a good deal to me. But I'm not looking for eggs, as it happens, and if I was, I shouldn't want yours! I don't like them raw.

Pigeon: Well, be off then!

Narr 4: Alice crouches down among the trees and takes a nibble of the other piece of mushroom. She immediately shrinks to her normal height.

## Scene 3

Narr 1: Alice begins walking through the woods and soon comes upon a little house.

Alice: Whoever lives there, it'll never do to come upon them this size. Why, I would frighten them out of their wits!

Narr 2: Alice begins nibbling on the piece of the mushroom that makes her smaller till she brings herself down to 9 inches tall.

Narr 3: Alice walks up to the house and tries knocking on the door. There is quite a bit of racket going on inside. Suddenly, the door swings open, and a large plate comes flying at Alice's head. She ducks out of the way just in time.

Alice: It's really dreadful the way all the creatures argue. It's enough to drive one crazy!

Narr 4: Alice enters the house. She is standing in a large kitchen that is full of smoke from one end to the other. The Duchess is sitting on a three-legged stool in the middle of the room, nursing a baby. The cook

is leaning over the fire, stirring a large cauldron, which seems to be filled with soup.

Alice: (to herself) There's certainly too much pepper in that soup!

Narr 1: The Duchess sneezes. The baby sneezes. The cook stirs more pepper into the soup. There is a large cat sitting in the corner and grinning from ear to ear.

Alice: Please, would you tell me why your cat grins like that?

The Duchess: It's a Cheshire cat, and that's why. Pig!

Narr 2: Alice jumps at the last word but quickly realizes that the Duchess was addressing the baby.

Alice: I didn't know that Cheshire cats always grinned. In fact, I didn't know that cats could grin.

The Duchess: They all can, and most of 'em do.

Alice: I don't know of any that do.

The Duchess: You don't know much, and that's a fact.

Narr 3: The cook takes the soup off the fire and then begins to throw everything within her reach at the Duchess and the baby. The fire irons come first, followed by a shower of saucepans, plates, and dishes.

Alice: Oh, please mind what you're doing!

The Duchess: If everyone minded their own business, the world would go round a deal faster than it does.

Alice: Which would not be an advantage. You see, the Earth takes 24 hours to turn round on its axis—

The Duchess: Talking of axes ... chop off her head!

Narr 4: Alice looks to see if the cook takes the hint, but she is too busy stirring the soup and does not seem to be listening.

Alice: Twenty-four hours ...

I think... or is it 12?

The Duchess: Oh, don't bother me! Here, you may nurse it a bit if you like.

Narr 1: The Duchess flings the baby at Alice, and she catches it.

The Duchess: I must go and get ready to play croquet with the

Queen.

Narr 2: The cook throws a frying pan at the Duchess as she leaves the room. Alice runs away with the baby. When she is far away from the house, she stops. The baby grunts.

Alice: Don't grunt. That's not at all a proper way of expressing yourself.

Narr 3: The baby grunts again. Alice looks down into its face. The baby's nose has become a snout, and its eyes have grown closer together.

Alice: If you're going to turn into a





pig, my dear, I'll have nothing more to do with you.

Narr 4: The baby grunts again. Alice watches as the baby turns into a pig. She sets it down on the ground, and it runs away.

Alice: If it had grown up, it would have made a dreadfully ugly child. But it makes a rather handsome pig, I think.

Narr 1: Before she has a chance to rest, Alice is startled by the Cheshire Cat sitting on a bough of a tree a few yards off. The Cheshire Cat only grins at her. It has very long claws and a great many teeth.

Alice: Cheshire Puss, would you please tell me which way I ought to go from here?

Cheshire Cat: That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

Alice: I don't care much where—  
Cheshire Cat: Then it doesn't matter which way you go.

Alice: So long as I get somewhere.

Cheshire Cat: Oh, you're sure to do that, if only you walk long enough.

Alice: What sort of people live about

here?

Cheshire Cat: In that direction lives a Hatter. And in that direction lives a March Hare. Visit either you like.

They're both mad though.

Alice: But I don't want to go among mad people!

Cheshire Cat: Oh, you can't help that. We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad.

Alice: How do you know I'm mad?

Cheshire Cat: You must be, or you wouldn't have come here.

Alice: And how do you know that you're mad?

Cheshire Cat: To begin with, a dog's not mad. You grant that?

Alice: I suppose so.

Cheshire Cat: Well, then, you see a dog growls when it's angry and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I



**'If you're going to turn into a pig, my dear, I'll have nothing more to do with you.'**

growl when I'm pleased and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore, I'm mad.

Alice: I call it purring, not growling.

Cheshire Cat: Call it what you like. Do you play croquet with the Queen today?

Alice: I should like it very much, but I haven't been invited yet.

Cheshire Cat: You'll see me there.

Narr 2: The Cheshire Cat vanishes. As Alice is looking at the place where it sat in the tree, it reappears again.

Cheshire Cat: By the by, what happened to the baby? I'd nearly forgotten to ask.

Alice: It turned into a pig.

Cheshire Cat: I thought it would.

Narr 3: The Cheshire Cat vanishes again. But this time, it does so slowly, beginning with the end of its tail and ending with the grin.

Alice: Well! I've often seen a cat without a grin, but a grin without a cat! It's the most curious thing I ever saw in all my life!

Narr 4: Alice leaves in the direction of the March Hare's.

## Scene 4

Narr 1: At the March Hare's house, the chimneys are shaped like ears, and the roof is thatched with fur. Alice nibbles a bit from the mushroom in her left hand and grows to 2 feet tall.

Narr 2: There is a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and

the Mad Hatter are sitting and having tea. A Dormouse is between them, fast asleep. The table is a large one, but the three characters are all crowded at one corner of it. Mad Hatter and March Hare: No room! No room!

Alice: There's plenty of room!

Narr 3: Alice takes a seat at the end of the table.

March Hare: Have some wine.

Alice: I don't see any wine.

March Hare: There isn't any.

Alice: Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it.

March Hare: It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited.

Alice: I didn't know it was your table. It's laid out for a great many more than three.

Mad Hatter: Your hair wants cutting.

Alice: You shouldn't make personal remarks. It's very rude.

Mad Hatter: Why is a raven like a writing desk?

Alice: I believe I can guess that.

March Hare: Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?

Alice: Exactly so.

March Hare: Then you should say what you mean.

Alice: I do. At least—I mean what I say—that's the same thing, you know.

Mad Hatter: Not the same thing a bit! You might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what

I see”!

March Hare: You might just as well say that “I like what I get” is the same thing as “I get what I like”!

Narr 4: The Dormouse talks in his sleep.

Dormouse: You might just as well say that “I breathe when I sleep” is the same thing as “I sleep when I breathe”!

Mad Hatter: It is the same thing with you!

Narr 1: The party sits silent for a minute.

Mad Hatter: What day of the month is it?

Alice: The fourth.

Narr 2: The Mad Hatter takes his watch out of his pocket and shakes it next to his ear.

Mad Hatter: Two days wrong! I told you butter wouldn’t suit the works!

March Hare: It was the best butter!

Mad Hatter: Yes, but some crumbs must have got in it as well.

Alice: What a funny watch! It tells the day of the month and doesn’t tell what o’clock it is!

Mad Hatter: Why should it? Does your watch tell you what year it is?

Alice: Of course not! But that’s because it stays the same year for such a long time.

Mad Hatter: Which is just the case with mine.

Alice: I don’t quite understand.

Mad Hatter: The Dormouse is asleep again.

Narr 3: The Mad Hatter pours some tea on the Dormouse’s nose.

Dormouse: Of course! Of course! That’s just what I was going to remark myself.

Mad Hatter: Have you guessed the riddle yet?

Alice: No, I give up. What’s the answer?

Mad Hatter: I haven’t the slightest idea.

March Hare: Nor I.

Alice: I think you might do something better with the time than waste it asking riddles with no answers.

Mad Hatter: If you knew Time as well as I do, you wouldn’t talk about wasting it. It’s him.

Alice: I don’t know what you mean.

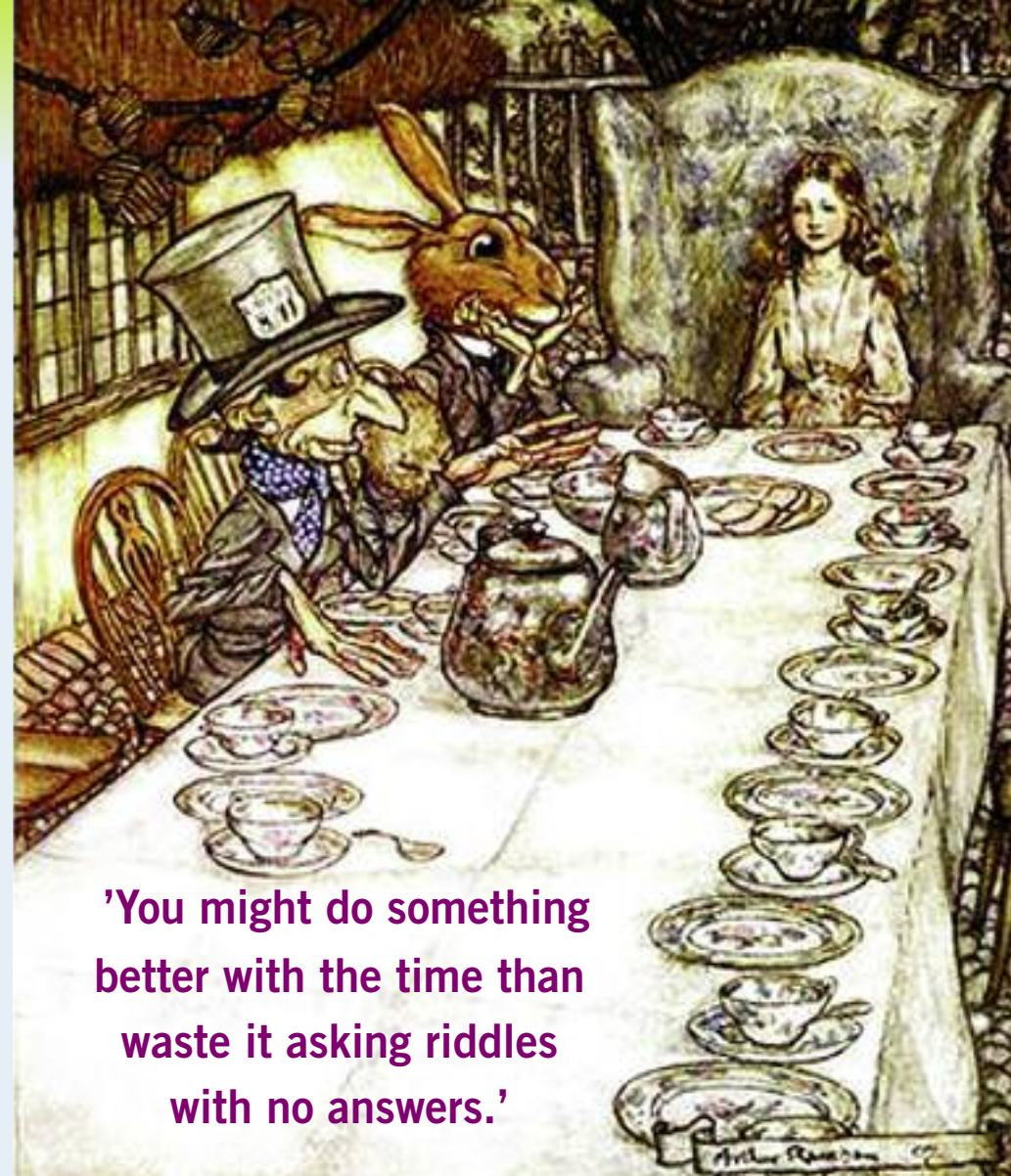
Mad Hatter: Of course you don’t! I daresay you never even spoke to Time!

Alice: No, but I know I have to beat time when I learn music.

Mad Hatter: Ah! That accounts for it. He won’t stand beating. Now if you only kept on good terms with him, he’d do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were 9 o’clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons. You’d only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half past one, time for dinner!

Alice: Is that the way you manage?

Mad Hatter: Not I! We quarreled last March—just before he went



**'You might do something better with the time than waste it asking riddles with no answers.'**

mad, you know.

Narr 4: The Mad Hatter indicates the March Hare with his teaspoon.

Mad Hatter: It was at the great concert given by the Queen of Hearts, and I had to sing “Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!

How I wonder what you’re at!

Up above the world you fly,

Like a tea tray in the sky.”  
Dormouse: Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle—

Mad Hatter: Well, I’d hardly finished the verse when the Queen jumped up and bawled out, “He’s murdering the time! Off with his head!”



## 'It's the stupidest tea party I ever was at in all my life!'

Alice: How dreadfully savage!

Mad Hatter: And ever since that, he won't do a thing I ask! It's always 6 o'clock now.

Alice: Is that why so many tea things are put out here?

Mad Hatter: Yes, that's it! It's always tea time here.

March Hare: I'm getting tired of all this. I vote the young lady tells us a story.

Alice: I'm afraid I don't know one.

March Hare: Then the Dormouse shall! Wake up, Dormouse!

Dormouse: I wasn't sleeping. I heard every word you fellows were saying.

March Hare: Tell us a story.

Alice: Yes, please do.

Dormouse: Once upon a time there were three little sisters, and they lived at the bottom of a well.

Alice: What did they live on?

Dormouse: They lived on treacle.

Alice: They couldn't! They'd be ill!

Dormouse: They were ill. Very ill!

Alice: But why did they have to live at the bottom of the well?

March Hare: Take some more tea.

Alice: I've had nothing yet, so I can't take more.

Mad Hatter: You mean you can't take less. It's very easy to take more than nothing.

Alice: Nobody asked your opinion.

Mad Hatter: Who's making personal remarks now?

Alice: Why did they live at the bottom of the well?

Dormouse: It was a treacle well!

Alice: There's no such thing as a—

Dormouse: And so these three little sisters—they were learning to draw, you know.

Alice: What did they draw?

Dormouse: Treacle.

Mad Hatter: I want a clean cup! Let's all move one place down!

Narr 1: Everyone moves one place down.

Alice: But I don't understand. Where did they draw the treacle from?

Mad Hatter: You can draw water from a water well. So I think you could draw treacle out of a treacle well. Eh, stupid?

Alice: But they were in the well!

Dormouse: Of course they were—well in! They were learning to draw—everything that begins with the letter M.

Alice: Why with an M?

Dormouse: Why not?

Narr 2: The Dormouse closes his eyes and is quiet again.

Alice: Really, I don't think—

Mad Hatter: Then you shouldn't talk!

Narr 3: This last bit of rudeness is too much for Alice to bear. She gets up from the table and walks away in disgust. She turns back once or twice to see the Mad Hatter and the March Hare trying to put the sleeping Dormouse in the teapot.

Alice: At any rate, I'll never go there again! It's the stupidest tea party I ever was at in all my life!

Narr 4: As Alice is walking away, she suddenly notices a tree with a door in it.

Alice: That's very curious! But everything's curious today. I think I may as well go in at once.

Narr 1: And she does.

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To read the conclusion of the play, visit [www.weeklyreader.com/teens/read](http://www.weeklyreader.com/teens/read).

### Write On



## Create Your Own Wonderland

Ahh Wonderland ... it's certainly a wonder place to visit, but would you really want there? Take a scene from the play and rewrite it, substituting yourself for the character of Alice. What would you do differently in the Duchess's kitchen?

Go to our blog [www.readandwriting.com](http://www.readandwriting.com) to see how READ's associate editor envisions himself at the Mad Hatter's