



(Alice in Wonderland is a fantasy novel written by Lewis Carroll. It tells us of the adventures of a little girl called Alice who falls into a rabbit hole and finds herself in a fantasy world where funny people mingle with peculiar creatures. Here she happens to attend a tea party with three of them: the March Hare, the Mad Hatter and the Dormouse.)

There was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it: a Dormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and talking over its head. ‘Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse,’ thought Alice; ‘only, as it’s asleep, I suppose it doesn’t mind’.

The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it: ‘No room! No room!’ they cried out when they saw Alice coming. ‘There’s PLENTY of room!’ said Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.

‘Have some wine,’ the March Hare said in an encouraging tone.

Alice looked all round the table, but there was nothing on it but tea. ‘I don’t see any wine,’ she remarked.

‘There isn’t any,’ said the March Hare.

‘Then it wasn’t very civil of you to offer it,’ said Alice angrily.

‘It wasn’t very civil of you to sit down without being invited,’ said the March Hare.

‘I didn’t know it was YOUR table,’ said Alice; ‘it’s laid for a great many more than three.’

‘Your hair wants cutting,’ said the Hatter. He had been looking at Alice for some time with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.

‘You should learn not to make personal remarks,’ Alice said with some severity; ‘it’s very rude.’

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was, ‘Why is a raven like a writing-desk?’

‘Come, we shall have some fun now!’ thought Alice. ‘I’m glad they’ve begun asking riddles – I believe I can guess that,’ she added aloud.

‘Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?’ said the March Hare.

‘Exactly so,’ said Alice.

‘Then you should say what you mean,’ the March Hare went on.

‘I do,’ Alice hastily replied; ‘at least – at least I mean what I say – that’s the same thing, you know’.

‘Not the same thing a bit!’ said the Hatter. ‘You might just as well say that “I see what I eat” is the same thing as “I

eat what I see”!’

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

‘You might just as well say,’ added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, ‘that “I breathe when I sleep” is the same thing as “I sleep when I breathe”!’

‘It IS the same thing with you,’ said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn’t much.

‘Have you guessed the riddle ... yet?’ the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

‘No, I give it up,’ Alice replied: ‘what’s the answer?’

‘I haven’t the slightest idea,’ said the Hatter.

‘Nor I,’ said the March Hare.

Alice sighed wearily. ‘I think you might do something better with the time,’ she said, ‘than waste it in asking riddles that have no answers’.

‘If you knew Time as well as I do,’ said the Hatter, ‘you wouldn’t talk about wasting IT. It’s HIM.’

‘I don’t know what you mean,’ said Alice.

‘Of course you don’t!’ the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. ‘I dare say you never even spoke to Time!’

‘Perhaps not,’ Alice cautiously replied: ‘but I know I have to beat time when I learn music’.

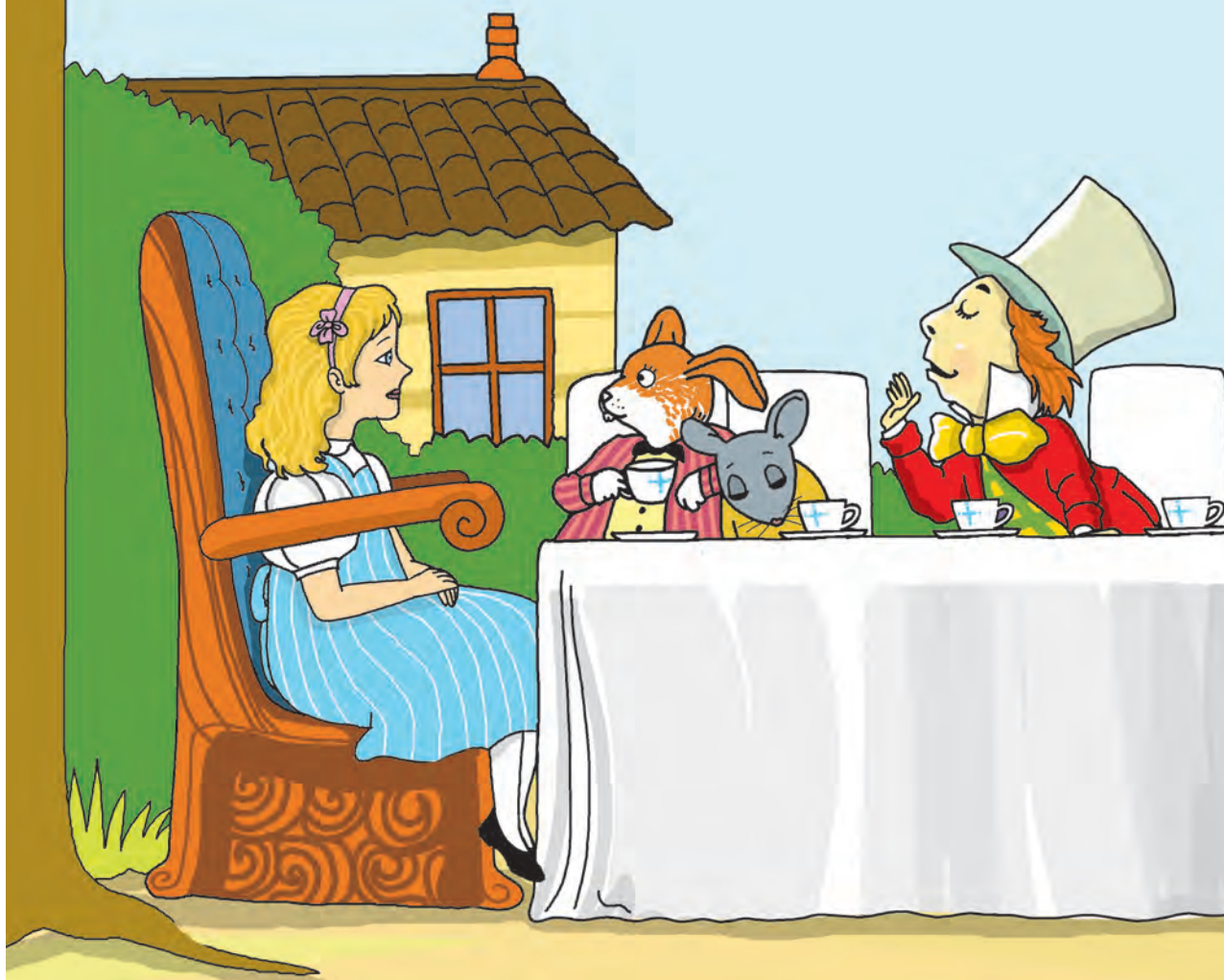
‘Ah! that accounts for it,’ said the Hatter. ‘He won’t stand beating. Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he’d do almost anything you liked with the clock. For instance, suppose it were nine o’clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you’d only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round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

(‘I only wish it was,’ the March Hare said to itself in a whisper.)

‘That would be grand, certainly,’ said Alice thoughtfully: ‘but then – I shouldn’t be hungry for it, you know’.

‘Not at first, perhaps,’ said the Hatter: ‘but you could keep it to half-past one as long as you liked’.

A bright idea came into Alice’s head. ‘Is that the reason so many tea-things are put out here?’ she asked.



‘Yes, that’s it,’ said the Hatter with a sigh: ‘it’s always tea-time, and we’ve no time to wash the things between whiles’.

‘Then you keep moving round, I suppose?’ said Alice.

‘Exactly so,’ said the Hatter: ‘as the things get used up.’

‘But what happens when you come to the beginning again?’ Alice ventured to ask.

‘Suppose we change the subject,’ the March Hare interrupted, yawning.

‘I’m getting tired of this. I vote the young lady tells us a story.’

‘I’m afraid I don’t know one,’ said Alice, rather alarmed at the proposal.

‘Then the Dormouse shall!’ they both cried. ‘Wake up, Dormouse!’ And they pinched it on both sides at once.

The Dormouse slowly opened his eyes. ‘I wasn’t asleep,’ he said in a hoarse, feeble voice: ‘I heard every word you fellows were saying’.



- **indignantly** : angrily, the anger caused by something wrong, unjust or mean
- **civil** : polite, well-mannered
- **wearily** : in a tired manner

- **between whiles** : between two occasions or two short periods
- **hoarse** : rough, grating (This adjective is used to describe human voice or sound.)

POINTERS

1. Read the passage aloud playing the roles of the different characters.
2. Write any three of the silly remarks made by the characters other than Alice. Write why you think the remark is silly.
3. Read the following.
 - I mean what I say. I say what I mean.
 - I see what I eat. I eat what I see.Use your imagination to write a funny sentence on this pattern.
4. Write what you would like to do if ‘Time’ was your friend.
5. Can you think of a similarity between a raven and a writing desk ? Write at least five differences between the two.
6. Visit a library : Read Lewis Carroll’s book ‘Alice in Wonderland.’