

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, **by Lewis Carroll, published in 1865**

Summary: Every child is familiar with the globally renowned story of Alice, a curious little girl who tumbled down a rabbit hole into the magical world of Wonderland. In Wonderland, Alice persistently pursued a talking white rabbit in a waistcoat. After some misleading directions from a grinning cheshire-cat, Alice stumbled upon a croquet game hosted by the riveting-and feared-Queen of hearts. The Queen's unfortunately short temper was accompanied by an urge to behead anyone who questioned her authority. Poor Alice was dragged into a ridiculous trial over the mere theft of a couple jam tarts!

What if I was to tell you that Alice stayed in Wonderland? Instead of waking up (like in the version we are all accustomed to) Alice continued to live in the magical world? Well the story goes a little like this...

How Alice Came To Be Queen Of Hearts **by Olive Fortune, 2023**

Alice had found herself in a bit of a pickle as she contradicted the Queen Of Hearts' foolish accusations in a trial over a plate of tarts. Alice presented a snappy attitude to the Queen's retorts but, surprisingly, this caught the Queen off guard and she found herself growing fond of the child's perkiness, as no one in the entirety of Wonderland had the nerve to display personality for the fear of being brutally beheaded.

The Queen Of Hearts bent low over her high pew, peering at Alice over her bosom.

"Call the trial off" barked the Queen suddenly.

Oh, thank heavens! Thought Alice. *I hasten to think how long this treacherous trial would have drawn on for.*

"You, child! Follow me!" said the Queen to Alice.

The little girl jumped after realizing that the dame was addressing her. Heavy at the Queen's heels Alice nervously trailed behind her all the way up to the grand palace where the Queen and the King claimed residence.

"Do you have family in Wonderland?" asked the Queen abruptly.

"No", said Alice. "But I do have a sister and a cat named Dinah. Oh, how I miss Dinah! I fear I may never see her again!"

The Queen listened intently, "You are to stay at the palace," said the Queen of Hearts. "Or be beheaded."

Alice gulped.

A soldier led Alice to a spacious loft in the palace. The faded blue drapes and light pink carpet were clearly designed for a child, but ever so curiously placed on the ceiling!

"Excuse me sir," asked Alice timidly. "How may I access the furniture if it is so queerly adorning the ceiling!" the soldier paused for a second, as if confused that someone would ask such a silly question.

"Well you simply have to go upside down, missy!"

Alice responded to this with an exasperated expression before she asked "Yes! I knew that much, but how can I go upside down?"

The soldier responded to *that* with an even more exasperated expression. "Why! I can't show you here! I'm at work missy!" and he bustled out of the room.

Alice wished she could lie down on the giant feather-down mattress above her and weep for Dinah.

"Oh, Dinah!" said Alice sadly. "How I fear I may never see you again!"

A singular tear dropped from Alice's face, but instead of hitting the floor, it fell onto the beautiful carpet above her! Alice had a realization that she would have to *jump* to reach the ceiling. Alice leapt as high as she could and fell with a soft *thlump* onto the four poster bed on the ceiling.

The next day the Queen of Hearts really demonstrated that she had taken a profound interest in Alice. She had her fitted for smocks and gowns in the Wonderland colors (blue and yellow).

Alice stayed in wonderland for quite a while and over time, the citizens of Wonderland came to realize how long Alice had been there. She became too big for the chairs at the mad tea party, too old to play with the Cheshire-cat, and positively cowered over birds and lizards alike.

Alice had been in Wonderland exactly nine years and today was Alice's birthday, a very special one indeed. Alice could barely sleep in her upside-down bed. She kept pondering to herself, "What will it be like to be sixteen years old? I know I shan't feel any different, but will I be any different?" The teenager kept on a steady

stream of worries and excitement, until the sun rose in the morning and she leapt out of bed, not having slept a wink.

The day was filled with fun. All her friends from across the kingdom came to celebrate the special occasion. The Doormouse, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the Dodo bird, the Mock Turtle and more! The friends played all kinds of games; they even had a Caucus race! The Queen Of Hearts stood high on the balcony overseeing the events in the field below. After a sixteen tier cake was devoured among the guests (one tier for each year of Alice's life) the Queen decided it was time to make a special announcement.

"Hear, hear or be beheaded." said the Queen Of Hearts seriously. The party went quiet instantaneously.

"I have an announcement to make! I am pleased to announce that Alice will be crowned the next Queen of Hearts upon my retirement!"

A second passed in absolute silence and then-applause! Alice's friends rejoiced that they would finally have a caring, kind and confident Queen. Alice was glowing with happiness. She had always remembered the world she had come from before Wonderland like a distant dream she had had a long time ago.

"How," said Alice, "could anything from my previous life have been better than this?"

Just at that moment some miles above Wonderland, Dinah the cat sat by the very special rabbit hole as she had done every day for the past nine years, waiting for her best friend to return, always and forever.