

# ALICE IN WONDERLAND

## CHAPTER 7:

### A MAD TEA PARTY

Adapted for The Ten Minute Tutor by: Debra Treloar

A table was set out, in the shade of the trees in front of the house, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea.

A Dormouse sat in the middle, but it seemed to be asleep.

The table was a long one, but the three were all crowded at one corner of it.

"No room! No room!" they called as soon as they saw Alice.

"There's lots of room," she said, and sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.



"Have some wine," the March Hare said in a kind tone.

Alice looked all a-round the ta-ble, but there was not a thing on it but tea.

"I don't see the wine," she said.

"There isn't an-y," said the March Hare.

"Then it wasn't po-lite to ask me to have wine," said Alice.

"It wasn't po-lite of you to sit down when no one asked you to take a seat," said the March Hare.

"I didn't know it was your ta-ble," said Alice; "it is set for more than three."

"Your hair needs a cut," said the Hat-ter. He had looked hard at Alice for some time and this was his first speech.

"You should learn not to speak to a guest like that," said Alice; "it is ve-ry rude."

The Hat-ter stretched his eyes quite wide at this; but all he said was, "Why is a crow like a desk?"

"Oh good, we shall have some fun now," thought Alice. "I think I can guess that," she added out loud.

"Do you mean that you think you can work out the an-swer?" asked the March Hare.

"I do," said Alice.

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

"I do," Al-ice said; "at least... at least I mean what I say... that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing one bit!" said the Hat-ter. "Why, you might just as well say, '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 Dor-mouse, who seemed to be talk-ing in his sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe!'"

"It is the same with you," said the Hat-ter.

No one spoke for some time, while Al-ice tried to think what she knew of crows and desks - which wasn't much.

The Hat-ter was the first to speak. "What day of the month is it?" he said, turn-ing to Al-ice.

He had his watch in his hand and looked at it and shook it now and then, while he held it to his ear.

Al-ice thought for a while then said, "The fourth."

"Two days wrong!" sighed the Hat-ter. "I told you but-ter wouldn't suit this watch," he add-ed with a look at the March Hare.

"It was the best but-ter," the March Hare said.

"Yes, but some crumbs must have got in," the Hat-ter growled.

"You should not have put it in with the bread-knife."

The March Hare took the watch and looked at it; then dipped it in-to his cup of tea and looked at it a-gain; but all he could think to say was, "it was the best but-ter, you know."

"Oh, what a fun-ny watch!" said Al-ice. "It tells you the day of the month and doesn't tell you what time it is!"

"Why should it?" growled the Hat-ter.

"Does your watch tell you what year it is?"

"Of course not," said Al-ice, "but there's no need for it, since it stays the same year for such a long time."

"Which is just the case with mine," said the Hat-ter; which seemed to Al-ice to have no sense in it at all.

"I don't quite know what you mean," she said.

"The Dor-mouse has gone to sleep, once more," said the Hat-ter, so he poured some tea on the tip of its nose.

The Dor-mouse shook its head, and said with its eyes still closed, "Of course, of course... just what I want-ed to say my-self."

"Have you guessed the rid-dle yet?" the Hat-ter asked Al-ice.

"No, I give up," she said. "What is the an-swer?"



"I do not know at all," said the Hat-ter.

"Me eith-er," said the March Hare.

Al-ice sighed. "I think you might do bet-ter with your time, than waste it, by ask-ing rid-dles that have no an-swes."

"If you knew Time as well as I do, you wouldn't say 'waste it...'  
It's ...'him'..."

"I don't know what you mean," Al-ice said.

"Of course you don't!" said the Hat-ter with a toss of his head.

"I dare say you have nev-er spok-en to Time."

"May-be not," she said, "but I know I have to beat in time when I learn to sing."

"Oh! That's it!" said the Hat-ter. "He won't stand a beat-ing. Now if you kept on good terms with him, he would do an-thing you liked with the clock.

Say it was nine o'clock and time to go to school, you would just have to give a hint to Time, and round goes the clock! Half-past one, time for lunch."

"I wish it was," the March Hare said to it-self.

"That would be great, I'm sure," said Al-ice: "but then... I would not be hun-gry."

"Not at first, per-haps, but you could keep it to half-past one as long as you liked," said the Hat-ter.

"Is that what you do?" asked Al-ice.

The Hat-ter shook his head and sighed. "Not me," he said. "Time and I fell out last March.

It was at the great con-cert giv-en by the Queen of Hearts and I had to sing:

'Twin-kle, twin-kle, lit-tle bat!  
How I wonder what you're at!

Do you know the song, per-haps?"

"I've heard some-thing like it," said Alice with a smile.

"It goes on, you know," the Hat-ter said, "like this:

'Up a-bove the world you fly,  
Like a tea-tray in the sky,  
Twin-kle, twin-kle...'"

Here the Dor-mouse shook it-self and sang in its sleep,  
"twin-kle, twin-kle, twin-kle, twin-kle..." and went on for so long,  
they had to pinch it to make it stop.

"Well, while I sang the first verse," the Hat-ter went on, "the  
Queen yelled out 'See how he mur-ders the time! Off with his  
head!' And ev-er since then, he won't do a thing I ask!  
It's al-ways six o'clock now."

A bright thought came in-to Al-ice's head. "Is that why there  
are so man-y tea things set out here?" she asked.

"Yes, that's it," said the Hat-ter with a sigh. "It's al-ways tea time  
and we've no time to wash the things."

"Then you keep mov-ing round the table, I guess," said Al-ice.

"Quite right," said the Hat-ter; "as the things get used up."

"But when you come back to where you started, what do you  
do then?" Al-ice dared to ask.

"I'm tired of this," yelled the March Hare. "I vote you tell us a  
story."

"...I'm a-fraid... I don't know one," said Al-ice.

"I want a clean cup," spoke up the Hat-ter.

He moved on as he spoke and the Dor-mouse moved in-to his place. The March Hare moved in-to the Dor-mouse's place and Al-ice was not too pleased, took the place of the March Hare.

The Hat-ter was the on-ly one to get a bet-ter place from the change. Al-ice was much worse off, and the March Hare had knocked the milk jug in to his plate.

"Now, for your sto-ry," the March Hare said to Al-ice.

"I'm sure I don't know,"... Alice be-gan, "I... I don't think..."

"Then you shouldn't talk," said the Hat-ter.

This was more than Al-ice could stand; so she got up and walked off, and though she looked back once or twice and hoped they would call af-ter her, they didn't seem to know that she was gone.



The last time she saw them, they were trying to put the poor Dor-mouse in-to a tea-pot.



"Well, I won't go there a-gain," said Al-ice as she found her way through the wood.

"It's the dull-est tea-par-ty I have been to in all my life."

As Al-ice said this, she saw one of the trees had a door in it.

"That's strange!" she said. "But then, I have-n't seen any-thing to-day that isn't strange. I think I may as well go in."

She went in and once more she found her-self in a long hall, and near to the lit-tle glass ta-ble. She took up the lit-tle key and un-locked the door that led to the gar-den. Then she ate some of the mush-room which she still had with her.

When she was a-bout a foot tall, she went through the door and walked down the lit-tle hall.



Then... she found herself, at last, in the love-ly garden, where she had seen the bright blooms and the cool foun-tains.