

‘not in that ridiculous fashion.’ And he got up very sulkily and crossed over to the other side of the court.

All this time the Queen had never left off staring at the Hatter, and, just as the Dormouse crossed the court, she said to one of the officers of the court, ‘Bring me the list of the singers in the last concert!’ on which the wretched Hatter trembled so, that he shook both his shoes off.

‘Give your evidence,’ the King repeated angrily, ‘or I’ll have you executed, whether you’re nervous or not.’

‘I’m a poor man, your Majesty,’ the Hatter began, in a trembling voice, ‘—and I hadn’t begun my tea—not above a week or so—and what with the bread-and-butter getting so thin—and the twinkling of the tea—’

‘The twinkling of the *what?*’ said the King.

‘It *began* with the tea,’ the Hatter replied.

‘Of course twinkling *begins* with a T!’ said the King sharply. ‘Do you take me for a dunce? Go on!’

‘I’m a poor man,’ the Hatter went on, ‘and most things twinkled after that—only the March Hare said—’

‘I didn’t!’ the March Hare interrupted in a great hurry.

‘You did!’ said the Hatter.

‘I deny it!’ said the March Hare.

‘He denies it,’ said the King: ‘leave out that part.’

‘Well, at any rate, the Dormouse said—’ the Hatter went on, looking anxiously round to see if he would deny it too: but the Dormouse denied nothing, being fast asleep.

‘After that,’ continued the Hatter, ‘I cut some more bread-and-butter—’

‘But what did the Dormouse say?’ one of the jury asked.