

she soon made out that it was only a mouse that had slipped in like herself.

‘Would it be of any use, now,’ thought Alice, ‘to speak to this mouse? Everything is so out-of-the-way down here, that I should think very likely it can talk: at any rate, there’s no harm in trying.’ So she began: ‘O Mouse, do you know the way out of this pool? I am very tired of swimming about here, O Mouse!’ (Alice thought this must be the right way of speaking to a mouse: she had never done such a thing before, but she remembered having seen in her brother’s Latin Grammar, ‘A mouse—of a mouse—to a mouse—a mouse—O mouse!’) The Mouse looked at her rather inquisitively, and seemed to her to wink with one of its little eyes, but it said nothing.

‘Perhaps it doesn’t understand English,’ thought Alice; ‘I daresay it’s a French mouse, come over with William the Conqueror.’ (For, with all her knowledge of history, Alice had no very clear notion how long ago anything had happened.) So she began again: ‘Où est ma chatte?’ which was the first sentence in her French lesson-book. The Mouse gave a sudden leap out of the water, and seemed to quiver all over with fright. ‘Oh, I beg your pardon!’ cried Alice hastily, afraid that she had hurt the poor animal’s feelings. ‘I quite forgot you didn’t like cats.’

‘Not like cats!’ cried the Mouse, in a shrill, passionate voice. ‘Would *you* like cats if you were me?’

‘Well, perhaps not,’ said Alice in a soothing tone: ‘don’t be angry about it. And yet I wish I could show you our cat Dinah: I think you’d take a fancy to cats if you could only