

I was thinking I should be free of them at last, they must needs come wriggling down from the sky! Ugh, Serpent!

‘But I’m *not* a serpent, I tell you!’ said Alice. ‘I’m a—I’m a—’

‘Well! *what* are you?’ said the Pigeon. ‘I can see you’re trying to invent something!’

‘I—I’m a little girl,’ said Alice, rather doubtfully, as she remembered the number of changes she had gone through that day.

‘A likely story indeed!’ said the Pigeon in a tone of the deepest contempt. ‘I’ve seen a good many little girls in my time, but never *one* with such a neck as that! No, no! You’re a serpent; and there’s no use denying it. I suppose you’ll be telling me next that you never tasted an egg!’

‘I *have* tasted eggs, certainly,’ said Alice, who was a very truthful child; ‘but little girls eat eggs quite as much as serpents do, you know.’

‘I don’t believe it,’ said the Pigeon; ‘but if they do, why then they’re a kind of serpent, that’s all I can say.’

This was such a new idea to Alice, that she was quite silent for a minute or two, which gave the Pigeon the opportunity of adding, ‘You’re looking for eggs, I know *that* well enough; and what does it matter to me whether you’re a little girl or a serpent?’

‘It matters a good deal to *me*,’ said Alice hastily; ‘but I’m not looking for eggs, as it happens; and if I was, I shouldn’t want *yours*: I don’t like them raw.’

‘Well, be off, then!’ said the Pigeon in a sulky tone, as it settled down again into its nest. Alice crouched down among