

## Chapter 2

### The Garden of Live Flowers

‘I could get to the top of that hill: and here’s a path that leads straight to it—at least, no, it doesn’t do that—’ (after going a few yards along the path, and turning several sharp corners), ‘but I suppose it will at last. But how curiously it twists! It’s more like a corkscrew than a path! Well, *this* turn goes to the hill, I suppose—no, it doesn’t! This goes straight back to the house! Well then, I’ll try it the other way.’

And so she did: wandering up and down, and trying turn after turn, but always coming back to the house, do what she would. Indeed, once, when she turned a corner rather more quickly than usual, she ran against it before she could stop herself.

‘It’s no use talking about it,’ Alice said, looking up at the house and pretending it was arguing with her. ‘I’m *not* going in again yet. I know I should have to get through the Looking-glass again—back into the old room—and there’d be an end of all my adventures!’

So, resolutely turning her back upon the house, she set out once more down the path, determined to keep straight on till she got to the hill. For a few minutes all went on well, and she was just saying, ‘I really *shall* do it this time—’ when the path gave a sudden twist and shook itself (as she described it afterwards), and the next moment she found herself actually walking in at the door.

‘Oh, it’s too bad!’ she cried. ‘I never saw such a house for getting in the way! Never!’

However, there was the hill full in sight, so there was nothing to be done but start again. This time she came upon a large flower-bed, with a border of daisies, and a willow-tree growing in the middle.

'O Tiger-lily,' said Alice, addressing herself to one that was waving gracefully about in the wind, '*I wish you could talk!*'

'We can talk,' said the Tiger-lily: 'when there's anybody worth talking to.'

Alice was so astonished that she could not speak for a minute: it quite seemed to take her breath away. At length, as the Tiger-lily only went on waving about, she spoke again, in a timid voice—almost in a whisper. 'And can *all* the flowers talk?'

'As well as *you* can,' said the Tiger-lily. 'And a great deal louder.'

'It isn't manners for us to begin, you know,' said the Rose, 'and I really was wondering when you'd speak! Said I to myself, "Her face has got *some* sense in it, though it's not a clever one!" Still, you're the right colour, and that goes a long way.'

'I don't care about the colour,' the Tiger-lily remarked. 'If only her petals curled up a little more, she'd be all right.'

Alice didn't like being criticised, so she began asking questions. 'Aren't you sometimes frightened at being planted out here, with nobody to take care of you?'

'There's the tree in the middle,' said the Rose: 'what else is it good for? But what could it do, if any danger came?' Alice asked.

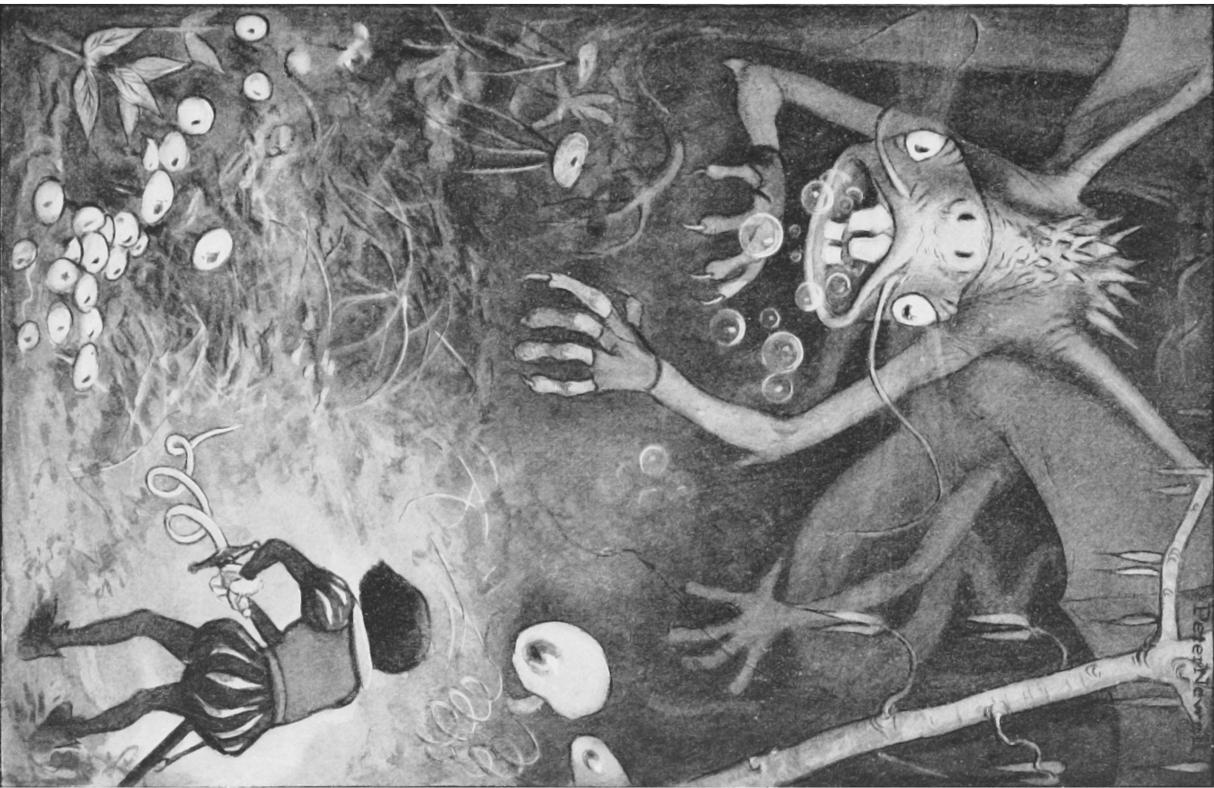
'It says "Bough-wough!"' cried a Daisy: 'that's why its branches are called boughs!'

'Didn't you know *that*?' cried another Daisy, and here they all began shouting together, till the air seemed quite full of little shrill voices. 'Silence, every one of you!' cried the Tiger-lily, waving itself passionately from side to side, and trembling with excitement. 'They know I can't get at them!' it panted, bending its quivering head towards Alice, 'or they wouldn't dare to do it!'

'Never mind!' Alice said in a soothing tone, and stooping down to the daisies, who were just beginning again, she whispered, 'If you don't hold your tongues, I'll pick you!'

There was silence in a moment, and several of the pink daisies turned white.

the rest of the house is like! Let's have a look at the garden first!' She was out of the room in a moment, and ran down stairs—or, at least, it wasn't exactly running, but a new invention of hers for getting down stairs quickly and easily, as Alice said to herself. She just kept the tips of her fingers on the hand-rail, and floated gently down without even touching the stairs with her feet; then she floated on through the hall, and would have gone straight out at the door in the same way, if she hadn't caught hold of the door-post. She was getting a little giddy with so much floating in the air, and was rather glad to find herself walking again in the natural way.



THE JABBERWOCK, WITH EYES OF FLAME



'WE CAN TALK,' SAID THE TIGER-LILY

'That's right!' said the Tiger-lily. 'The daisies are worst of all. When one speaks, they all begin together, and it's enough to make one wither to hear the way they go on!'

'How is it you can all talk so nicely?' Alice said, hoping to get it into a better temper by a compliment. 'I've been in many gardens before, but none of the flowers could talk.'

'Put your hand down, and feel the ground,' said the Tiger-lily. 'Then you'll know why.'

Alice did so. 'It's very hard,' she said, 'but I don't see what that has to do with it.'

'In most gardens,' the Tiger-lily said, 'they make the beds too soft—so that the flowers are always asleep.'

This sounded a very good reason, and Alice was quite pleased to know it. 'I never thought of that before!' she said.

'It's *my* opinion that you never think *at all*,' the Rose said in a rather severe tone.

'I never saw anybody that looked stupider,' a Violet said, so suddenly, that Alice quite jumped; for it hadn't spoken before.

'Hold *your* tongue!' cried the Tiger-lily. 'As if *you* ever saw anybody! You keep your head under the leaves, and snore away there, till you know no more what's going on in the world, than if you were a bud!'

'Are there any more people in the garden besides me?' Alice said, not choosing to notice the Rose's last remark.

'There's one other flower in the garden that can move about like you,' said the Rose. 'I wonder how you do it—' ('You're always wondering,' said the Tiger-lily), 'but she's more bushy than you are.'

'Is she like me?' Alice asked eagerly, for the thought crossed her mind, 'There's another little girl in the garden, somewhere!'

'Well, she has the same awkward shape as you,' the Rose said, 'but she's redder—and her petals are shorter, I think.'

'Her petals are done up close, almost like a dahlia,' the Tiger-lily interrupted: 'not tumbled about anyhow, like yours.'

'But that's not *your* fault,' the Rose added kindly: 'you're beginning to fade, you know—and then one can't help one's petals getting a little untidy.'



BEWARE THE JUBJUB BIRD, AND SHUN THE FRUMIOUS BANDER-SNATCH!

'Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!

Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun

The frumious Bandersnatch!'

He took his vorpal sword in hand:

Long time the manxome foe he sought—

So rested he by the Tumtum tree,

And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,

The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,

Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,

And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through

The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!

He left it dead, and with its head

He went galumphing back.

And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?

Come to my arms, my beamish boy!

O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!

He chortled in his joy.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

'It seems very pretty,' she said when she had finished it, 'but it's *rather* hard to understand!' (You see she didn't like to confess, even to herself, that she couldn't make it out at all.) 'Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas—only I don't exactly know what they are! However, *somebody* killed *something*: that's clear, at any rate—'

'But oh!' thought Alice, suddenly jumping up, 'if I don't make haste I shall have to go back through the Looking-glass, before I've seen what

Alice didn't like this idea at all: so, to change the subject, she asked 'Does she ever come out here?'

'I daresay you'll see her soon,' said the Rose. 'She's one of the thorny kind.'

'Where does she wear the thorns?' Alice asked with some curiosity.

'Why all round her head, of course,' the Rose replied. 'I was wondering *you* hadn't got some too. I thought it was the regular rule.'

'She's coming!' cried the Larkspur. 'I hear her footstep, thump, thump, thump, along the gravel-walk!'

Alice looked round eagerly, and found that it was the Red Queen. 'She's grown a good deal!' was her first remark. She had indeed: when Alice first found her in the ashes, she had been only three inches high—and here she was, half a head taller than Alice herself!

'It's the fresh air that does it,' said the Rose: 'wonderfully fine air it is, out here.'

'I think I'll go and meet her,' said Alice, for, though the flowers were interesting enough, she felt that it would be far grander to have a talk with a real Queen.

'You can't possibly do that,' said the Rose: 'I should advise you to walk the other way.'

This sounded nonsense to Alice, so she said nothing, but set off at once towards the Red Queen. To her surprise, she lost sight of her in a moment, and found herself walking in at the front-door again.

A little provoked, she drew back, and after looking everywhere for the queen (whom she spied out at last, a long way off), she thought she would try the plan, this time, of walking in the opposite direction.

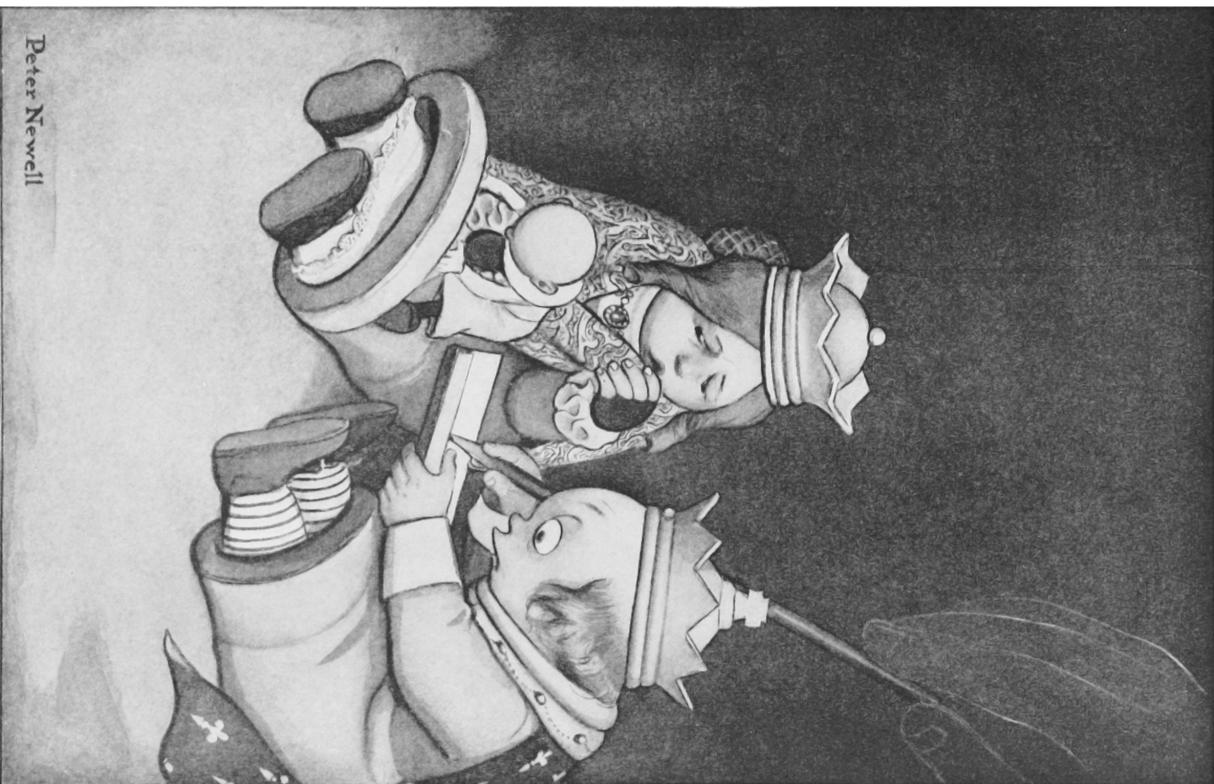
It succeeded beautifully. She had not been walking a minute before she found herself face to face with the Red Queen, and full in sight of the hill she had been so long aiming at.

'Where do you come from?' said the Red Queen. 'And where are you going? Look up, speak nicely, and don't twiddle your fingers all the time.' Alice attended to all these directions, and explained, as well as she could, that she had lost her way.

'I don't know what you mean by *your* way,' said the Queen: 'all the ways about here belong to *me*—but why did you come out here at all?'



'WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?' SAID THE RED QUEEN



THE POOR KING LOOKED PUZZLED AND UNHAPPY

Alice looked on with great interest as the King took an enormous memorandum-book out of his pocket, and began writing. A sudden thought struck her, and she took hold of the end of the pencil, which came some way over his shoulder, and began writing for him.

The poor King looked puzzled and unhappy, and struggled with the pencil for some time without saying anything; but Alice was too strong for him, and at last he panted out, ‘My dear! I really *must* get a thinner pencil. I can’t manage this one a bit; it writes all manner of things that I don’t intend—’

‘What manner of things?’ said the Queen, looking over the book (in which Alice had put ‘*The White Knight is sliding down the poker. He balances very badly!*’) ‘That’s not a memorandum of your feelings!’

There was a book lying near Alice on the table, and while she sat watching the White King (for she was still a little anxious about him, and had the ink all ready to throw over him, in case he fainted again) she turned over the leaves, to find some part that she could read, —for it’s all in some language I don’t know,’ she said to herself.

It was like this.

JABBERWOCKY.

zvor vñtis eht bns gillid aswt  
z̄ds w̄c eht ni eldm̄g bns envg biD  
z̄vogorod eht z̄sw vanim illA  
.eđsriguo sh̄r emom eht bnA

She puzzled over this for some time, but at last a bright thought struck her. ‘Why, it’s a Looking-glass book, of course! And if I hold it up to a glass, the words will all go the right way again.’

This was the poem that Alice read.

JABBERWOCKY.

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

she added in a kinder tone. ‘Curtsey while you’re thinking what to say, it saves time.’

Alice wondered a little at this, but she was too much in awe of the Queen to disbelieve it. ‘I’ll try it when I go home,’ she thought to herself, ‘the next time I’m a little late for dinner.’

‘It’s time for you to answer now,’ the Queen said, looking at her watch: ‘open your mouth a *little* wider when you speak, and always say “your Majesty.”’

‘I only wanted to see what the garden was like, your Majesty—’

‘That’s right,’ said the Queen, patting her on the head, ‘which Alice didn’t like at all, ‘though, when you say “garden,”—I’ve seen gardens, compared with which this would be a wilderness.’

Alice didn’t dare to argue the point, but went on: ‘—and I thought I’d try and find my way to the top of that hill—’

‘When you say “hill,”’ the Queen interrupted, ‘I could show you hills, in comparison with which you’d call that a valley.’

‘No, I shouldn’t,’ said Alice, surprised into contradicting her at last: ‘a hill *can’t* be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense—’

The Red Queen shook her head, ‘You may call it “nonsense” if you like,’ she said, ‘but *I’ve* heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary!’

Alice curtseyed again, as she was afraid from the Queen’s tone that she was a *little* offended: and they walked on in silence till they got to the top of the little hill.

For some minutes Alice stood without speaking, looking out in all directions over the country—and a most curious country it was. There were a number of tiny little brooks running straight across it from side to side, and the ground between was divided up into squares by a number of little green hedges, that reached from brook to brook.

‘I declare it’s marked out just like a large chessboard!’ Alice said at last. ‘There ought to be some men moving about somewhere—and so there are!’ She added in a tone of delight, and her heart began to beat quick with excitement as she went on. ‘It’s a great huge game of chess that’s being played—all over the world—if this *is* the world at all, you know. Oh, what fun it is! How I *wish* I was one of them! I wouldn’t mind being a

"I DECLARE IT'S MARKED OUT JUST LIKE A LARGE CHESSBOARD!" ALICE SAID AT LAST



SHE THOUGHT SHE MIGHT AS WELL DUST HIM A LITTLE

