

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

1

Tea Party

1

*There was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, there was nothing on it but tea. The March Hare and the Hatter were having tea. A Dormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and the talking over its head. The three were all crowded together at one corner of the table.*

ALICE

Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse. Only, as it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind.

MARCH HARE

No room!

HATTER

No room!

DOREMOUSE

No room!

ALICE

There's plenty of room!

MARCH HARE

Have some wine.

ALICE

I don't see any wine.

MARCH HARE

There isn't any.

ALICE

Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it.

MARCH HARE

It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited.

ALICE

I didn't know it was your table. It's laid for a great many more than three.

HATTER

Your hair wants cutting.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

You should learn not to make personal remarks. It's very rude.

HATTER

Why is a raven like a writing-desk?

ALICE

Come, we shall have some fun now! I'm glad they've begun asking riddles. - I believe I can guess that.

MARCH HARE

Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?

ALICE

Exactly so.

MARCH HARE

Then you should say what you mean.

ALICE

I do. At least - at least I mean what I say - that's the same thing, you know.

HATTER

Not the same thing a bit! You might just as well say that "I see what I eat" is the same thing as "I eat what I see"!

DOREMOUSE

You might just as well say, that "I breathe when I sleep" is the same thing as "I sleep when I breathe"!

HATTER

It is the same thing with you.

HATTER

What day of the month is it?

ALICE

The fourth.

HATTER

Two days wrong! I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!

MARCH HARE

It was the best butter.

HATTER

Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well, you shouldn't have put it in with the bread-knife.

(CONTINUED)

MARCH HARE

It was the best butter, you know.

ALICE

What a funny watch! It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is!

HATTER

Why should it? Does your watch tell you what year it is?

ALICE

Of course not. But that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together.

HATTER

Which is just the case with mine.

ALICE

I don't quite understand you.

DOREMOUSE

Of course, of course; just what I was going to remark myself.

HATTER

Have you guessed the riddle yet?

ALICE

No, I give it up. What's the answer?

HATTER

I haven't the slightest idea.

MARCH HARE

Nor I

ALICE

I think you might do something better with the time than waste it in asking riddles that have no answers.