

"Read them," he added, turning to the White Rabbit.

There was dead silence in the court whilst the White Rabbit read out the verses.

"That's the most important piece of evidence we've heard yet," said the King.

"I don't believe there's an atom of meaning in it," ventured Alice.

"If there's no meaning in it," said the King, "that saves a world of trouble, you know, as we needn't try to find any. Let the jury consider their verdict."

"No, no!" said the Queen. "Sentence first—verdict afterwards."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Alice loudly. "The idea of having the sentence first!"

"Hold your tongue!" said the Queen, turning purple.

"I won't!" said Alice.

"Off with her head!" the Queen shouted at the top of her voice. Nobody moved.

"Who cares for *you*?" said Alice (she had grown to her full size by this time). "You're nothing but a pack of cards!"

At this, the whole pack rose up in the air and came flying down upon her; she

