

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-05958-9 - Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
Lewis Carroll
Frontmatter
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Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

An accomplished mathematician, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832–98), writing under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, transformed children's literature with this world-famous classic. First published in 1865, this tale of the topsyturvy was originally created to entertain the young Alice Liddell and her sisters during a picnic in the summer of 1862. The humour with which Dodgson enlivened his mathematical works is exploited to the full here: many of the now-familiar nonsense songs and poems in the story are parodies of contemporary works, and there are a number of allusions to mathematical concepts in the text. The illustrations by *Punch* cartoonist Sir John Tenniel (1820–1914) depict the cast of much-loved characters – including the White Rabbit, the Cheshire Cat and the Mad Hatter – with a brilliance which perfectly enhances Dodgson's gently satirical fantasy. In its universal appeal, the story remains unsurpassed.

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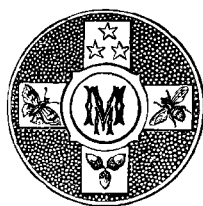
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BY
LEWIS CARROLL.

WITH FORTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS
BY JOHN TENNIEL.

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All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide ;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three ! In such an hour,
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather !
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together ?

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Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict "to begin it"—
In gentler tone Secunda hopes
"There will be nonsense in it!"—
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not *more* than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
"The rest next time—" "It *is* next time!"
The happy voices cry.

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Thus grew the tale of Wonderland :
 Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out—
 And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
 Beneath the setting sun.

Alice! a childish story take,
 And with a gentle hand
Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
 In Memory's mystic band,
Like pilgrim's withered wreath of flowers
 Plucked in a far-off land.

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