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**JUNIOR
CLASSICS**

**CHILDREN'S
FAVOURITES**

NA213712D

Lewis Carroll
**ALICE'S ADVENTURES
IN WONDERLAND**

Read by **Fiona Shaw**



1	Down the Rabbit-Hole	5:07
2	Alice was not a bit hurt...	5:47
3	The Pool of Tears	9:20
4	A Caucus-Race and a Long Tale	9:11
5	The Rabbit sends in a little bill	7:07
6	The first thing she heard...	6:05
7	Advice from a Caterpillar	9:25
8	Pig and Pepper	4:08
9	The door led right into a large kitchen	4:00
10	While the Duchess sang...	7:30
11	A Mad Tea-Party	13:16
12	The Queen's Croquet Ground	6:56
13	"Get to your places!"	6:20
14	The Mock Turtle's Story	6:13
15	They had not gone far...	7:02
16	The Lobster Quadrille	2:41
17	So they began solemnly dancing round and round Alice...	9:32
18	Who stole the Tarts?	9:07
19	Alice's Evidence	5:26
20	These were the verses the White Rabbit read...	8:15

Total time: 2:22:34

Lewis Carroll

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

There are at least two ways of reading this classic children's tale. One may either regard it as an innocently inventive and diverting piece for readers of all ages – or one may choose to bring to bear on it the full weight of academic analysis, be it literary, mathematical, philosophical or psychoanalytical.

The book was first published in 1865 and 1871, and has been hugely popular ever since. Unlike most Victorian children's books (including Carroll's own **Sylvie and Bruno**), it is refreshingly unmoralistic and brilliantly imaginative. Perhaps one might see it as a pioneering work in the rich tradition of British children's writing which includes (for example) **The Wind in the Willows**, the **Pooh** books and the animal tales of **Beatrix Potter**. But **Alice** is in many respects more demanding and disturbing – even children unaware of symbolic interpretation may well be haunted or discomfited by the dream worlds Carroll has created, worlds where it is not quite enough to say that nonsense prevails since there is almost always a kind of perverse or inverted logic

at work.

In **Alice's Adventures in Wonderland** the child heroine dreams the experiences which constitute the story, and (of course) wakes at the end to tell her sister what has happened. The dream world of Wonderland is peopled largely by creatures which speak, feel and behave much like caricatured human beings: the White Rabbit, for instance, is clearly neurotically obsessed by time and terrified of authority, while the playing-card King and Queen of Hearts bicker like an ill-matched, long-married couple. Anger, violence and the threat of violence are real enough within the dream-world – the dormouse is scalded and dunked at the Mad Hatter's Tea Party – while irritation and disillusionment seem more common than contentment – witness the doleful narrative of the Mock Turtle. At times, Alice seems to be in real danger, whether from flying saucepans in the Duchess' kitchen or from the attentions of a gigantic puppy, but at last she is able to break free from the suffocating power of her fantasy by exclaiming, after she has

regained her normal size, *'Why, you're nothing but a pack of cards!'*

Child listeners will surely be delighted by the picaresque variety of the story, but adults may wonder about some possible deeper or unifying interpretation. Freudian readings are legion, but it may be more interesting to see the adventure as a disturbing challenge to our conventional notions of reality. Carroll repeatedly asks questions about the nature of time or the meaning of names, poses mathematical paradoxes and semantic quibbles – and the effect of this is to promote an acute unease, a fundamental, perhaps existential, uncertainty about meaning and purpose. Martin Gardner (editor of **The Annotated Alice**) suggests that *'the last level of metaphor in the Alice books is this: that life, viewed rationally and without illusion, appears to be a nonsense tale told by a mathematician.'*

This, of course, is appropriate because Lewis Carroll (1832-1898, real name Charles Dodgson) was in fact a lecturer in Mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford, where he had been an undergraduate after schooling at Rugby. He was devoted to all kinds of puzzles, conjuring and games, especially where a mathematical or logical element was involved; he was also a keen

and skilled amateur photographer in the early years of that art. Above all, Carroll was devoted to children, or rather to little girls, and **Alice** was based on stories that were originally told to the daughters of H.G. Liddell, Dean of Christ Church. His interest in little girls seems to have been entirely innocent, at least at a conscious level, and (perhaps surprisingly to modern parents) he was allowed to photograph or sketch them in various stages of undress. He never married, and appears to have been quite content with the life of a bachelor Oxford don; in spite of the almost absurdist philosophy of **Alice**, Carroll was firmly orthodox in his Christian belief, and once wrote, *'My life is so strangely free from all trial and trouble that I cannot doubt my own happiness is one of the talents entrusted to me to 'occupy' with, till the Master shall return, by doing something to make other lives happy.'*

Notes by Perry Keenlyside



The White Rabbit



A little door about 15 inches high



The White Rabbit returned, splendidly dressed

The Duchess, the baby and a grinning cat





'I am opening out like a telescope'



The Mouse was swimming away as hard as it could go



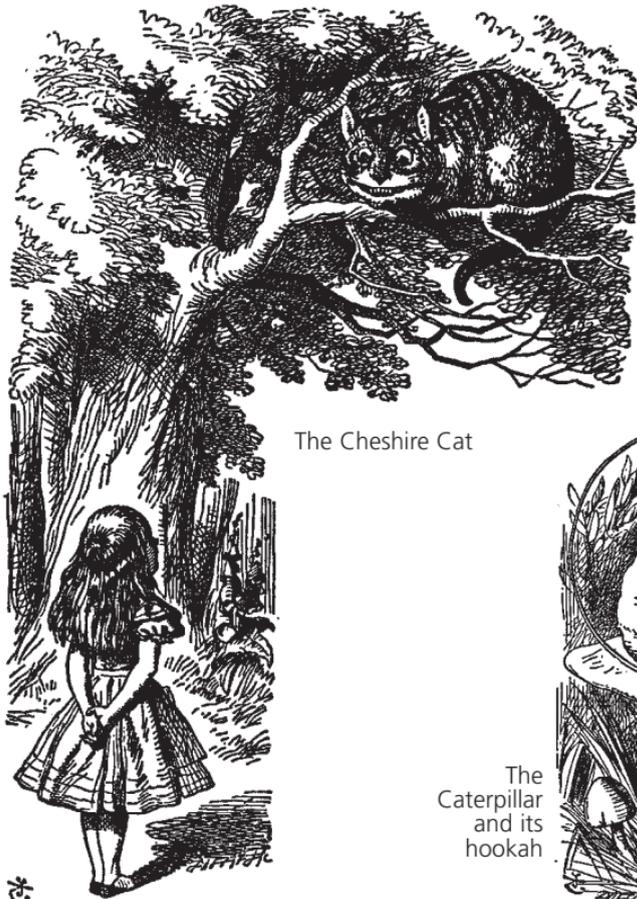
It was very uncomfortable



The White Rabbit
blew three blasts
on the trumpet



The Dodo solemnly presented the thimble



The Cheshire Cat



The
Caterpillar
and its
hookah



The Mad Hatter's Tea-Party



The Rabbit falls into a cucumber-frame



The Gryphon and the Mock Turtle



'Off with her head!'



The Fish-Footman delivers an invitation

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Music programmed by Nicolas Soames

Cover picture: Tenniel, *The Mad Hatter's Tea-Party*.
Courtesy of Mary Evans Picture Library.

Lewis Carroll

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND

Read by **Fiona Shaw**

Alice's adventures, funny, inventive and disturbing, have fascinated and delighted children and adults alike since their publication. The fantasy worlds in which she finds herself introduce her to characters as varied and well-known as the White Rabbit, the Mad Hatter, the Queen of Hearts and the Cheshire Cat...



Fiona Shaw has won the Olivier Award for Best Actress four times, as well as a clutch of other awards, for her roles in *You Like It, Electra, The Good Person of Sechuan, Hedda Gabler* and *Machinal*. Her interpretation of *Richard II* was widely acclaimed, as is her work in films such as *My Left Foot, Jane Eyre* and *Anna Karenina*. She also plays the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet* for Naxos AudioBooks.

"Fiona Shaw gives a wonderfully fresh reading of Carroll's classic tale, making his fantastical characters thoroughly believable through an impressive range of voices. Vivid sound effects together with music by Delius, Parry and Bruckner complete this delightful production."

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Engineer (speech): Alan Smyth, Bucks Audio Cassettes

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Total time
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