
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Alice in Wonderland

Part 4: The White Rabbit's house



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Narrator

Hello. Alice fell down a Rabbit Hole one day and found herself in a Wonderland, where animals talk, curious things happen and everything she eats and drinks makes her grow bigger or smaller. Now she is sitting alone. Suddenly, she heard footsteps. The White Rabbit was running towards her. He seemed to be very worried.

White Rabbit

Oh dear! Where can I have dropped them? I must find them, or I'm sure The Duchess will **chop off** my head!

Narrator

Alice guessed he was looking for the gloves and fan that he had dropped - but she didn't know where they were either. After all her growing and shrinking, Alice was exactly the same size as the rabbit. When the White Rabbit saw Alice, he spoke to her quite angrily.

White Rabbit

Mary Ann! What are you doing out here? Run home this minute and get me a pair of gloves and a fan! Quickly!

Alice

How surprised he'll be when he finds out I'm not Mary Ann!

Narrator

Alice began to run, as the White Rabbit had told her, although she didn't quite know where she should run to. But soon, a little house appeared with the words 'W. Rabbit' written on the door.

Alice

I won't knock on the door. The real Mary Ann might hear me.

Narrator

Alice crept into the house and went quietly upstairs to a little bedroom... and there she found two fans, three pairs of gloves and...

Alice

Another bottle! I hope it makes me grow bigger again. I'm tired of being such a tiny little thing!

Narrator

...and sure enough, Alice began to grow. Taller and taller she grew, until...

Alice

Ouch! My head! That's quite tall enough. That's tall enough! O-o-o-oh...

Narrator

Alice tried her hardest to stop growing - but it seemed to her like the harder she tried, the taller she grew. Soon Alice was so big that she filled the whole room. Her head pressed up against the ceiling, her arm went out of the window, and one of her feet went up the **chimney**.

Alice

What will become of me now?

Narrator

Outside the house, a crowd started to gather. Alice heard voices.

Voices

Oh my, whatever could it be? What's that?

Narrator

Soon, the White Rabbit arrived.

White Rabbit

What's that in the window?

Voice

It's an arm, sir!

White Rabbit

An arm? Well, it's got no business being there! **Bill! Bill!** Fetch the **ladder** and take it away!

Narrator

Bill was the **gardener**. He brought a ladder and climbed up on to the **roof**.

White Rabbit

I won't have an arm in my bedroom! Down you go Bill, down the chimney!

Narrator

Poor Bill went up the ladder and tried to go down the chimney. But Alice's foot was waiting for him... with a big kick.

Bill

Ohhhhhhhh!!!!

Voices

Quick, quick, help him, help him up. Give him some air...

Alice

There! That's got rid of him! Now what will they try?

Voices

Cakes! Cakes! Try the cakes!

White Rabbit

Yes! The cakes: bring the cakes! We'll need a lot of them. That's right. Now, everybody, throw them through the other window!

Alice

What's this...? Oh! Lots and lots of little cakes. I wonder... If I ate them, would I shrink again? They must do something... and I must get out of this house. I'll try just one of them to start with.

Narrator

Alice ate one of the little cakes, and soon found herself to be a little smaller. She ate another and another, until at last she was just the right size to run out of the bedroom... and out of the house.

Voices

Look! There she is! Get her! Catch her, quickly!

Narrator

But Alice was too fast for them. She ran far away from the White Rabbit's house, deeper and deeper into the forest until she became quite lost. She was wondering what she could eat or drink to make her grow to the right size again, when suddenly, she saw in front of her a large mushroom - about the same size as herself, with a large blue **caterpillar** sitting on top of it, smoking a pipe and taking no notice of Alice at all. Will the caterpillar help Alice to grow again? I'll tell you next time.

Vocabulary

chop off

remove by cutting

chimney

the vertical tunnel above a fireplace in a room which smoke goes up so that it doesn't go into the room

ladder

a wood or metal set of steps that you climb to reach things that are high up

gardener

a person whose job is to look after a garden

roof

the part of a building which covers the top

caterpillar

a small creature that will one day become a butterfly