

Queen of Hearts

58

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

ACT I

behind the KNAVE OF HEARTS. *The QUEEN stops short in front of ALICE.*)

THE QUEEN OF HEARTS (*pointing at ALICE, and addressing the KNAVE*)
Who is this? (*THE KNAVE only bows and smiles in reply. To KNAVE.*) Idiot! (*To ALICE.*) What's your name, child?

ALICE

My name is Alice, so please your Majesty. (*To herself.*) Why, they're only a pack of cards, after all. I needn't be afraid of them!

QUEEN (*indicating the GARDENERS*)
And who are these? (*Their backs being the same as the rest of the pack, she cannot tell whether they are GARDENERS, SOLDIERS, or three of her own children.*)

ALICE

How should I know? It's no business of mine. (*She is surprised at her own courage. The QUEEN turns crimson with fury, and glares at ALICE like a wild beast.*)

QUEEN

Off with her head! Off —

ALICE (*loudly*)

Nonsense! (*The QUEEN is silenced.*)

KING OF HEARTS

Consider, my dear, she is only a child. (*The QUEEN considers and turns her attention to the THREE GARDENERS.*)

QUEEN (*to the KNAVE*)

Turn them over! (*The KNAVE, still holding the crown, carefully turns the GARDENERS over with one foot. To the GARDENERS.*) Get up! (*They do so and begin bowing to the KING, the QUEEN, and everybody else.*) Leave off that! You make me giddy. (*Turning to the rose tree.*) What have you been doing here?

TWO OF HEARTS (*going down on one knee*)

May it please Your Majesty, we were trying —

QUEEN

I see! Off with their heads! (*TWO SOLDIERS take the THREE GARDENERS out. To ALICE.*) Can you play croquet?

ALICE

Yes.

QUEEN

Come on then! (*She starts to march. All mark time in grand processional. [* 9a.] ALICE steps along beside the WHITE RABBIT.*)

WHITE RABBIT (*very timidly*)

It's a fine day.

ALICE

Very. Where's the Duchess?

RABBIT

Hush, hush! (*Whispering.*) She is under sentence of execution.