

This story is brought to you by Ririro.com for free. Our mission is to give all children in the world free access to a variety of stories. The stories can be read, downloaded and printed online and cover a wide range of topics, including animals, fantasy, science, history, diverse cultures and much more.

Support our mission by sharing our website. We wish you a lot of fun reading!



# Ririro

IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

Ririro

## Alice in Wonderland (10/12): The Lobster Dance

The Mock Turtle sighed, looked at Alice and tried to speak, but for a minute or two sobs choked his voice. "Same as if he had a bone in his throat," said the Gryphon, and set to work to shake him and punch him in the back. At last the Mock Turtle found his voice and with tears running down his cheeks, he went on:

"You may not have lived much in the sea"—("I haven't," said Alice) "so you can not know what a fine thing a Lobster Dance is!"

"No," said Alice. "What sort of a dance is it?"

"Why," said the Gryphon, "you first form in a line on the seashore—"

"Two lines!" cried the Mock Turtle. "Seals, turtles, and so on; then when you've cleared all the small fish out of the way—"

"That takes some time," put in the Gryphon.

"You move to the front twice—"

"Each with a lobster by his side!" cried the Gryphon.

"Of course," the Mock Turtle said: "move to the front twice—"



"Change and come back in same way," said the Gryphon.

"Then, you know," the Mock Turtle went on, "you throw the—"

"The lobsters!" shouted the Gryphon, with a bound into the air.

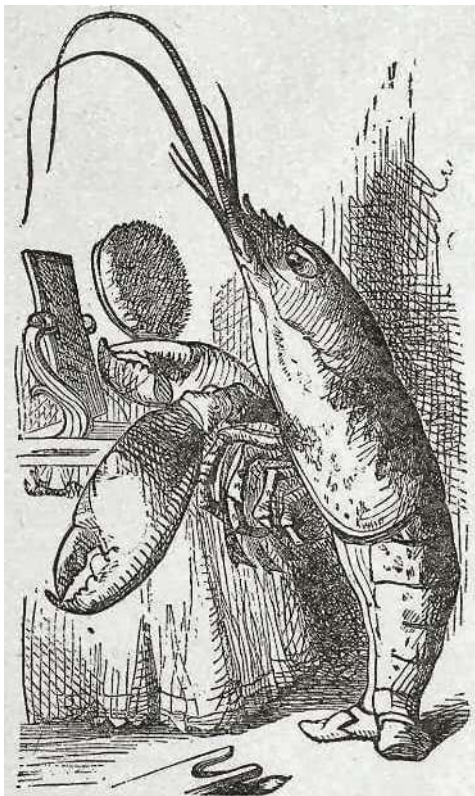
"As far out to sea as you can—"

"Swim out for them," screamed the Gryphon.

"Turn heels over head in the sea!" cried the Mock Turtle.

"Change again!" yelled the Gryphon at the top of his voice.

"Then back to land, and—that's all the first part," said the Mock Turtle.



Both the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle had jumped about like mad things all this time. Now they sat down quite sad and still, and looked at Alice.

"It must be a pretty dance," said Alice.

"Would you like to see some of it?" asked the Mock Turtle.

"Oh, yes," she said.

"Come, let's try the first part!" said the Mock Turtle to the Gryphon. "We can do it without

lobsters, you know. Who shall sing?"

"Oh, you sing," said the Gryphon. "I don't know the words."

So they danced round and round Alice, now and then treading on her toes when they passed too close. They waved their fore paws to mark the time, while the Mock Turtle sang a queer kind of song, each verse of which ended with these words:

"Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?"

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?"

"Thank you, it's a fine dance to watch," said Alice, glad that it was over at last.

"Now," said the Gryphon, "tell us about what you have seen and done in your life."

"I could tell you of the strange things I have seen to-day," said Alice, with some doubt as to their wishing to hear it.

"All right, go on," they both cried.

So Alice told them what she had been through that day, from the time when she first saw the White Rabbit.

They came up quite close to her, one on each side, and sat still till she got to the part where she tried to say a poem and the words all came out wrong. Then the Mock Turtle drew a long breath and said, "That's quite strange!"

"It's all as strange as it can be," said the Gryphon.

"It all came wrong!" the Mock Turtle said, while he seemed to be in deep thought. "I should like to hear her try to say something now. Tell her to begin." He

looked at the Gryphon as if he thought it had the right to make Alice do as it pleased.

"Stand up and say the poem" said the Gryphon.

"How they do try to make one do things!" thought Alice.

"I might just as well be at school at once." She stood up and tried to repeat it, but her head was so full of the Lobster Dance, that she didn't know what she was saying, and the words all came very strange.

"That's not the way I used to say it when I was a child," said the Gryphon.

"Well, I never heard it before," said the Mock Turtle, "but there's no sense in it at all."

Alice did not speak; she sat down with her face in her hands, and thought, "Will things never be as they used to any more?"

"I should like you to tell what it means," said the Mock Turtle.

"She can't do that," said the Gryphon. "Go on with the next verse."

"But his toes?" the Mock Turtle went on. "How could he turn them out with his nose, you know?"

"Go on with the next verse," the Gryphon said once more; "it begins 'I passed by his garden.'"

Alice thought she must do as she was told, though she felt sure it would all come wrong, and she went on.

"What is the use of saying all that stuff!" the Mock Turtle broke in, "if you don't tell what it means as you go on? I tell you it is all nonsense."

"Yes, I think you might as well leave off," said the Gryphon, and Alice was but too glad to do so.

"Shall we try the Lobster dance once more?" the Gryphon went on, "or would you like the Mock Turtle to sing you a song?"

"Oh, a song please, if the Mock Turtle would be so kind," Alice said with so much zest that the Gryphon threw back his head and said, "Hm! Well, each one to his own taste. Sing her 'Turtle Soup,' will you, old fellow?"

The Mock Turtle heaved a deep sigh, and in a voice choked with sobs, began his song, but just then the cry of "The trial is on!" was heard a long way off.

"Come on," cried the Gryphon. He took her by the hand, ran off, and did not wait to hear the song.

"What trial is it?" Alice panted as she ran, but the Gryphon only said, "Come on!" and still ran as fast as he could.