



Through The Looking Glass Children's Book Review



Princess Alyss of Wonderland

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Illustrated by Catia Chien

Novelty Book

Ages 10 and up

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I imagine that you think you know all there is to know about Alice in Wonderland. It may surprise you to know then that everything you thought you knew is quite wrong. First of all the story was not made up by Lewis Carroll. It is in fact a real story which was related to the man by a girl whose real name is Alyss – please note the correct spelling – who is in fact a princess from a place called Wonderland.

Alyss was celebrating her 7th birthday when her evil aunt Redd and an enormous cat attacked the royal palace. Alyss's mother insisted that the Royal Bodyguard, Hatter Madigan, should take Alyss to safety. They went through the Whispering Woods until they came to the Pool of Tears. When they jumped into the pool the Hatter and Alyss got separated so Alyss came into our world all alone. Of course she tried and tried to find the puddle she came up through but there are so many puddles in London that her job was a terribly difficult one. For a while she lived with a group of street urchins and all went well but eventually Alyss was captured by a London bobby and was taken to an orphanage.

Of course Alyss was appalled by the orphanage and she wasn't too keen on the family who adopted her either. The Liddells live in Oxford and are very "unimaginative." Naturally they don't believe a word that Alyss says about her life as a princess. They tell her that she dreams too much, something which Alyss cannot and will not accept. After all where she comes from dreams and

imaginings are considered to be wonderful things.

Then Alyss meets Charles Dodgson who promises to write down her story. Alyss hopes that someone from Wonderland will read her story and come and find her. Alas for Alyss, for Charles Dodgson, a.k.a Lewis Carroll, does not write the story as it was told to him. Poor Alyss is furious and she begins to despair that anyone will ever find her. How will she ever get home to Wonderland at this rate?

In this unique multimedia book with its scrapbook format we get to meet the 'real' Alice, or Alyss. We come to appreciate how frightening it would be for a child to be lost in a world that is not her own and to be trapped in such a world. We can also see what it would be like to be trapped in such world without having ones imagination to sustain one. Alyss loses her imagination for a while until she thankfully finds it again. With her imagination restored to her, she is better able to cope with what is happening to her. Could it be that we are all like this little girl and would be better off if we used our imaginations a bit more?

Beautifully presented with interesting artwork, letters to read, envelopes to open, a map to look at and so much more, this is a book which will give readers hours of enjoyment and much to think about.