Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book,' thought Alice 'without pictures or conversations?'

So she was considering in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so VERY remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so VERY much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself, 'Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!' (when she thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but when the Rabbit actually TOOK A WATCH OUT OF ITS WAISTCOAT-POCKET, and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and fortunately was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything; then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves; here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed; it was labelled 'ORANGE MARMALADE', but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar for fear of killing somebody, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

'Well!' thought Alice to herself, 'after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!' (Which was very likely true.)

Down, down, down. Would the fall NEVER come to an end! 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think—' (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the schoolroom, and though this was not a VERY good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) '—yes, that's about the right distance—but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?' (Alice had no idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but thought they were nice grand words to say.)
It was a glorious victory, wasn’t it?’ said the White Knight, as he came up panting.

‘I don’t know,’ Alice said doubtfully. ‘I don’t want to be anybody’s prisoner. I want to be a Queen.’

‘So you will, when you’ve crossed the next brook,’ said the White Knight. ‘I’ll see you safe to the end of the wood—and then I must go back, you know. That’s the end of my move.’

‘Thank you very much,’ said Alice. ‘May I help you off with your helmet?’ It was evidently more than he could manage by himself; however, she managed to shake him out of it at last.

‘Now one can breathe more easily,’ said the Knight, putting back his shaggy hair with both hands, and turning his gentle face and large mild eyes to Alice. She thought she had never seen such a strange-looking soldier in all her life.

He was dressed in tin armour, which seemed to fit him very badly, and he had a queer-shaped little deal box fastened across his shoulder, upside-down, and with the lid hanging open. Alice looked at it with great curiosity.

‘I see you’re admiring my little box.’ the Knight said in a friendly tone. ‘It’s my own invention—to keep clothes and sandwiches in. You see I carry it upside-down, so that the rain can’t get in.’

‘But the things can get OUT,’ Alice gently remarked. ‘Do you know the lid’s open?’

‘I didn’t know it,’ the Knight said, a shade of vexation passing over his face. ‘Then all the things must have fallen out! And the box is no use without them.’ He unfastened it as he spoke, and was just going to throw it into the bushes, when a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he hung it carefully on a tree. ‘Can you guess why I did that?’ he said to Alice.

Alice shook her head.

‘I hope some bees may make a nest in it—then I should get the honey.’

‘But you’ve got a bee-hive—or something like one—fastened to the saddle,’ said Alice. ‘Yes, it’s a very good bee-hive,’ the Knight said in a discontented tone, ‘one of the best kind. But not a single bee has come near it yet. And the other thing is a mouse-trap. I suppose the mice keep the bees out—or the bees keep the mice out, I don’t know which.’

‘I was wondering what the mouse-trap was for,’ said Alice. ‘It isn’t very likely there would be any mice on the horse’s back.’

‘Not very likely, perhaps,’ said the Knight: ‘but if they DO come, I don’t choose to have them running all about.’

‘You see,’ he went on after a pause, ‘it’s as well to be provided for EVERYTHING. That’s the reason the horse has all those anklets round his feet.’

‘But what are they for?’ Alice asked in a tone of great curiosity.

‘To guard against the bites of sharks,’ the Knight replied. ‘It’s an invention of my own. And now help me on. I’ll go with you to the end of the wood—What’s the dish for?’

‘It’s meant for plum-cake,’ said Alice.

‘We’d better take it with us,’ the Knight said. ‘It’ll come in handy if we find any plum-cake. Help me to get it into this bag.’

This took a very long time to manage, though Alice held the bag open very carefully,
because the Knight was so VERY awkward in putting in the dish: the first two or three times that he tried he fell in himself instead. 'It's rather a tight fit, you see,' he said, as they got it in a last; 'There are so many candlesticks in the bag.' And he hung it to the saddle, which was already loaded with bunches of carrots, and fire-irons, and many other things. 'I hope you've got your hair well fastened on?' he continued, as they set off. 'Only in the usual way,' Alice said, smiling. 'That's hardly enough,' he said, anxiously. 'You see the wind is so VERY strong here. It's as strong as soup.'

'Have you invented a plan for keeping the hair from being blown off?' Alice enquired. 'Not yet,' said the Knight. 'But I've got a plan for keeping it from FALLING off.' 'I should like to hear it, very much.'

'First you take an upright stick,' said the Knight. 'Then you make your hair creep up it, like a fruit-tree. Now the reason hair falls off is because it hangs DOWN—things never fall UPWARDS, you know. It's a plan of my own invention. You may try it if you like.'
It is very seldom that mere ordinary people like John and myself secure ancestral halls for the
summer. A colonial mansion, a hereditary estate, I would say a haunted house, and reach the height
of romantic felicity—but that would be asking too much of fate!

Still I will proudly declare that there is something queer about it.

Else, why should it be let so cheaply? And why have stood so long untenanted?

John laughs at me, of course, but one expects that in marriage.

John is practical in the extreme. He has no patience with faith, an intense horror of superstition,
and he scoffs openly at any talk of things not to be felt and seen and put down in figures.

John is a physician, and perhaps—(I would not say it to a living soul, of course, but this is dead
paper and a great relief to my mind)—perhaps that is one reason I do not get well faster.

You see he does not believe I am sick!

And what can one do?

If a physician of high standing, and one’s own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is
really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression—a slight hysterical tendency—
what is one to do?

My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing.

So I take phosphates or phosphites—whichever it is, and tonics, and journeys, and air, and exercise,
and am absolutely forbidden to "work" until I am well again.

Personally, I disagree with their ideas.

Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good.

But what is one to do?

I did write for a while in spite of them; but it does exhaust me a good deal—having to be so sly
about it, or else meet with heavy opposition.

I sometimes fancy that in my condition if I had less opposition and more society and stimulus—but

John says the very worst thing I can do is to think about my condition, and I confess it always
makes me feel bad.

So I will let it alone and talk about the house.

The most beautiful place! It is quite alone standing well back from the road, quite three miles from
the village. It makes me think of English places that you read about, for there are hedges and walls
and gates that lock, and lots of separate little houses for the gardeners and people.

There is a delicious garden! I never saw such a garden—large and shady, full of box-bordered paths,
and lined with long grape-covered arbors with seats under them.

There were greenhouses, too, but they are all broken now.

There was some legal trouble, I believe, something about the heirs and coheirs; anyhow, the place
has been empty for years.

That spoils my ghostliness, I am afraid, but I don’t care—there is something strange about the
house—I can feel it.

I even said so to John one moonlight evening but he said what I felt was a draught, and shut the
window.

I get unreasonably angry with John sometimes I’m sure I never used to be so sensitive. I think it is
due to this nervous condition.

But John says if I feel so, I shall neglect proper self-control; so I take pains to control myself—
before him, at least, and that makes me very tired.

I don’t like our room a bit. I wanted one downstairs that opened on the piazza and had roses all
over the window, and such pretty old-fashioned chintz hangings! but John would not hear of it.

He said there was only one window and not room for two beds, and no near room for him if he
took another.

He is very careful and loving, and hardly lets me stir without special direction.

I have a schedule prescription for each hour in the day; he takes all care from me, and so I feel
basely ungrateful not to value it more.
He said we came here solely on my account, that I was to have perfect rest and all the air I could get. "Your exercise depends on your strength, my dear," said he, "and your food somewhat on your appetite; but air you can absorb all the time. ' So we took the nursery at the top of the house.

It is a big, airy room, the whole floor nearly, with windows that look all ways, and air and sunshine galore. It was nursery first and then playroom and gymnasium, I should judge; for the windows are barred for little children, and there are rings and things in the walls.
The paint and paper look as if a boys' school had used it. It is stripped off—the paper in great patches all around the head of my bed, about as far as I can reach, and in a great place on the other side of the room low down. I never saw a worse paper in my life.
One of those sprawling flamboyant patterns committing every artistic sin. It is dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough to constantly irritate and provoke study, and when you follow the lame uncertain curves for a little distance they suddenly commit suicide—plunge off at outrageous angles, destroy themselves in unheard of contradictions.
The color is repellent, almost revolting; a smouldering unclean yellow, strangely faded by the slow-turning sunlight.
It is a dull yet lurid orange in some places, a sickly sulphur tint in others.
No wonder the children hated it! I should hate it myself if I had to live in this room long.

There comes John, and I must put this away,—he hates to have me write a word.
Bac File - The Imaginary

Extract 2 from The Yellow Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1899.