we're all Mad here (or we will be soon)

by daydreamer11

Summary

Curiosity killed the cat, but satisfaction brought it back.

Notes

Disclaimer: I have not, nor will I ever, own any version of Alice in Wonderland.

Dinah has always loved cats.
Alice has always loved Dinah.

They were both too curious for their own good, really, so it shouldn't have surprised them so much the day that Dinah fell through a Looking Glass, chasing after answers, and Alice followed her, chasing after Dinah.

The thing about Wonderland is that time runs differently there. Minutes here could be hours, days, years, decades in Wonderland.

Alice only spent days in Wonderland.
Dinah was not so lucky.

It was Dinah-the-cat, she remembered, who led Alice into Wonderland in the story.
Bloody hell, she thought. I've stepped through The Looking Glass. Where's the bloody Cheshire Cat to direct me when I need it? And where's Alice? The thought of a missing Alice drives her Mad.

What she didn't know, what she couldn't have known was this: a Dinah has always been The Cheshire; Wonderland takes care of that.

“Alice? There's none by that name here anymore. And if there is, none have seen 'im in many a year.” the Flowers say. Dinah's Sanity cracks. As she thanks them, her grin is just a little bit too broken, too wide, too Mad and the Flowers stare.

Behind Dinah, where neither she nor the Flowers look, a pair of pearly whites Grin back at her.

The Cheshire is Trickster and Guide, Enigma and Puppeteer. The Cheshire is Cat and Dinah is Not but nothing is as it seems in Wonderland, and after all, we're all Mad here, aren't we?

There are dangers in Wonderland for Outsiders Who Are Not Alice, but Wonderland has a way of fixing those problems. The Cheshire exists for a reason, you know.

Dinah doesn't know these things yet, and lets herself drift to sleep under a tree by the Flowers.

*I'm sorry, but you must wait for your Alice-love, my curious kitten* the Cat whispers in her dreams, weaving around Dinah's body, floating further and further up, freezing her in place, *the Time is not right. Not yet. But it will come, I promise.*

Its' Smile is broken and wide and Mad, and Dinah shivers at the sight of it. She can swear she's seen that Grin somewhere before.

*I do not know how to survive in this place!* Dinah cries.

*Then learn, the cat whispers, nuzzling her face.*

Something in Dinah breaks.

*Then teach me,* the girl growls.

The Cheshire smiles and begins the cycle anew, as the girl listens and listens and listens and learns to disappear. It's not that hard. She's always been good at disappearing.

When she wakes, her eyes gleam and glow brighter than the rising sun as she grins and grins and grins.

The Flowers exchange nervous glances but it's too late and now all that remains is her Cheshire smile.

Meanwhile, worlds away, Alice stands in front of a Looking Glass.

“Dinah?”

The sound of her voice travels through the glass and echoes throughout Wonderland.

The Cat Grins and Grins and Grins until nothing but her Smile remains.

Alice steps through.