

My room is my peaceful, little modernized Library of Alexandria. White walls, grey wooden floors, everything more or less in its place. My television sits centered against my wall, my art desk is organized in that way where I insist it is “organized,” and my bookshelves are sorted by how much they intimidate me when I look at them. I was hovering by the large white bookshelf in my room, the one holding the heavyweights like Crime and Punishment, and my mythology epics; mostly just looking for something to distract me.

I reached for my old copy of Through the Looking-Glass. I have read it more times than I can count, but there is something about the way Alice just accepts absolute chaos that makes it comforting when my brain feels too loud. When I pulled it out though, the shelf did not just give me the book. It gave a deep, weird mechanical thud, and the entire unit shifted backward into the wall.

I just stood there for a second, fully convinced I had either broken reality or my furniture had given up on life. Instead, there was suddenly a room where there absolutely should not have been one.

Stepping inside felt like walking into someone else’s dream that forgot to stay consistent. The air changed immediately, like it had its own personality. It did not smell like my laundry or paint markers anymore, but like the damp earth and fancy floral perfume you would smell at a renown banquet. To my left, curtains moved like they were living and breathing. To my right, a table was set for a tea party that looked like it had just been abruptly abandoned, steam still curling off a porcelain pot as if someone had only just stood up.

It was exactly what Alice saw. And yet everything still felt slightly wrong in a way I could not explain. Shadows did not behave properly. Light seemed optional. Through the far window, I could see flowers with faces leaning toward each other, whispering and gossiping in a language that sounded as lovely and lively as wind chimes. Among the group, specifically the rose and tiger-lily were rather rude. But it was beautiful, but also overwhelming, like reality had decided to stop for a fleeting moment.

I glanced back at my room. From here, my bookshelf and desk looked almost fake, like a dollhouse someone had carefully arranged to behave while I was away. For a second, I actually considered going further in, just to see if there was a talking cat or something equally concerning waiting for me.

But then I paused at the familiar voice of my mother yelling my name, so I quickly reached out, pulled the shelf back, and it clicked neatly into place like it was all a

hallucination. The short-lived magic disappeared behind the rows of my favorite novels,
as if nothing had ever occurred in the first place,

(491 word count)