

in the kitchen that did *not* sneeze were the cook and a large cat, which was grinning from ear to ear.

"Please would you tell me," said Alice, a little timidly, "why your cat grins like that?"

"It's a Cheshire-Cat," said the Duchess, "and that's why."

"I didn't know that Cheshire-Cats always grinned; in fact, I didn't know that cats *could* grin," said Alice.

"You don't know much," said the Duchess, "and that's a fact."

Just then the cook took the caldron of soup off the fire, and at once set to work throwing everything within her reach at the Duchess and the baby—the fire-irons came first; then followed a shower of sauce-pans, plates and dishes. The Duchess took no notice of them, even when they hit her, and the baby was howling so much already that it was quite impossible to say whether the blows hurt it or not.

"Oh, *please* mind what you're doing!" cried Alice, jumping up and down in an agony of terror.

"Here! You may nurse it a bit, if you like!" the Duchess said to Alice, flinging the baby at her as she spoke. "I must go and get ready to play croquet with the Queen," and she hurried out of the room.

Alice caught the baby with some difficulty, as it was a queer-shaped little creature and held out its arms and legs in all directions. "If I don't take this child away with me," thought Alice, "they're sure to kill it in a day or two. Wouldn't it be murder to leave it behind?" She said the last words out loud and the little thing grunted in reply.