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## In the Kitchen

*Mary Graham Bonner*

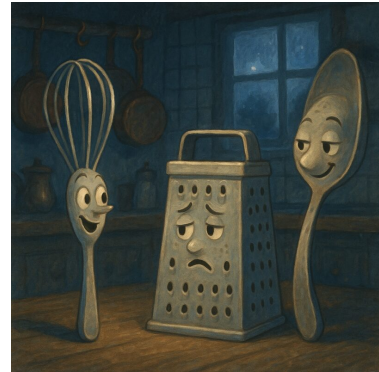
Late one night, when the house was quiet and still and everyone was asleep, the kitchen things held a meeting.

"I'll be the first to speak," said the egg beater. "My name is unfortunate — no one wants to be a beater, it sounds violent and disagreeable. But consider: I beat things day in and day out, eggs and cream and everything they ask of me, and I am never cross. Not once. Doesn't that say something remarkable about my disposition?"

The pots and pans and tins agreed that it did.

"And that," said the egg beater, "is what matters. Not the name. The character."

The cheese grater had been listening unhappily. "My situation," it began, "is different. I've always believed my name meant I was the greatest of all kitchen tools."



The gravy spoon cleared its throat. "Well. I spend a great deal of time at the dining table, and I hear how people use words. 'Greater' and 'grater' sound alike, but they're spelled quite differently and mean entirely different things. You're named for what you do — the grating — not for any hierarchy among the kitchen implements."

The cheese grater was very quiet for a moment.

"Never mind," said the egg beater gently. "I have a name that sounds actively unpleasant, and I rise above it every single day. You can too."

"I suppose I can," said the cheese grater. "But I'll admit I'm disappointed."

After that, they talked about other things.

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