

Sweet Porridge, or the Magic Porridge Pot

By Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm



There was a poor but pious little girl who lived alone with her mother. They no longer had anything to eat. So the child went into the forest, and there an old woman met her. She knew of the girl's sorrow, and presented her with a little pot, which when she said, "Little pot, cook," would cook good, sweet millet porridge, and when she said, "Little pot, stop," it stopped cooking.

The girl took the pot home to her mother, and now they were freed from their poverty and hunger, and ate sweet porridge as often as they chose.

One time when the girl had gone out, her mother said, "Little pot, cook." And it did cook, and she ate until she was full, and then she wanted the pot to stop cooking, but did not know the word.

So it went on cooking and the porridge rose over the edge, and still it cooked on until the kitchen and whole house were full, and then the next house, and then the whole street, just as if it wanted to satisfy the hunger of the whole world. It was terrible, and no one knew how to stop it.

At last when only one single house remained, the child came home and just said, "Little pot, stop," and it stopped cooking, and anyone who wished to return to the town had to eat his way back.