

The Sweet Soup

From Mother Goose's Treasury

Once upon a time there was a poor but very good little girl who lived alone with her mother. The two had nothing in the house to eat. The child went out into the forest, and there she met an old woman, who already knew her distress. The old woman presented her with a pot which had the following power: If one said to it, "Boil, little pot!" it would cook sweet soup; and when one said: "Stop, little pot!" it would immediately stop cooking. The little girl took the pot home to her mother, and now they could have soup as often as they pleased.

One day, the little girl went out, and while she was gone the mother said: "Boil, little pot!" The little pot began to cook, and she soon ate all she wished. But when the poor woman wanted the pot to stop, she found she did not know the special words. The pot boiled away, and very quickly was over the edge. As it boiled and boiled, the kitchen became full of soup, then the house, and the next house, and soon the whole street. Nobody knew how to stop it! At last, when nearly the whole village was filled with soup, the child returned and said at once: "Stop, little pot!"

Immediately it stopped boiling; but whoever wishes to enter the village now must eat his way through the soup!

1. What did the little pot cook when the little girl said "Boil, little pot"?

2. What happened when the mother could not stop the pot from boiling?

