

The Adventure in the Kitchen

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DEEP IN THE NIGHT, there was nothing in the street but lines of trees and street lamps and Mr. Potato strolling about alone.

"Hi, Mr. Potato! Why not go home?" asked the little elf, landing beside him from a tree.

"The kitchen is in a muck!" said Mr. Potato, helplessly shaking his head. "Mrs. Onion got mad too often, emitting some sort of unendurable odor everywhere; Miss Chili keeps waking up the sleeping dog; Buster Soybeans makes trouble here and there; and the silly old pumpkin runs amok around the kitchen, regarding himself as a wheel—oh, my gracious!" Mr. Potato was out to keep himself from the fearful chaos in the kitchen.

"Well, it's very late now, little elf. What are you doing here?"

"I'm looking for a place to sleep," answered the little elf.

"You can come with me," said Mr. Potato zealously. "There is a pot of dough that is rising. It is soft and resilient. There, I imagine, you'll have a sound sleep."

Following Mr. Potato, the little elf entered the kitchen. The idea of sleeping

in the dough was such a strange idea, but one as perfect as he had ever heard. As Mr. Potato had described it, the kitchen and all in it were at sixes and sevens: the silly old pumpkin who considered himself a wheel trundled along, almost knocking the little elf down; Mrs. Onion and Miss Chili got into a scrap with each other, arguing about who was the hottest woman in the world, desperately emitting their intolerable acrid odor. The kitchen was teeming with a terribly piquant smell, so much so that the little

elf let out three loud sneezes in succession.

After being led to the pot of dough by Mr. Potato, the little elf soon fell asleep on it. It was such a comfortable, springy bed. Naughty Buster Soybean found it

so intriguing that a little man was sleeping on the dough, so he scattered a great deal of yeast on it. Then, with the little elf sleeping on it, the dough began to rise a second time, expanding on and on, in spite of the fact that the top had already reached the ceiling. Swathed in the dough, the little elf became a little



dough man as he struggled to get out. As soon as they saw the little dough man, Mrs. Onion and Miss Chili stopped their quarrel. They were struck by a new game, one in which they would get the little dough man, throw him into the oven, and wait for a little bread man to come out.

"What a cute little bread man he would be!" shouted Mrs. Onion and Miss Chili.

"Help! Help! It's too hot here!" cried the little elf, suffering from the heat of being covered in bread. He shook off the coating of bread and desperately ran away from the great confusion of the kitchen.

*Translation from the Chinese
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From The Bedtime Story of the Little Elf (Beijing: Chinese Children's Publishing House), copyright © 2003 by Yang Hongying.

Adventures in Language

CHINESE is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Numerous dialects exist, depending on the region of the country. The official spoken language is Putonghua (the common speech) or Mandarin. The Chinese written language uses symbols called characters. Chinese characters had their origin in pictograms, meaning each character represents a concrete object. To introduce children to reading and writing conventional Chinese, teachers use pinyin, an alphabet system with roman letters. This system indicates each character's pronunciation.

	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Simplified</i>	<i>Pinyin</i>	<i>Pronunciation Cues</i>
How are you?	你好嗎?	你好吗?	ni hao ma?	nee how mah?
See you later.	待會見	待会见	dai hui jian	dai hwey jan
Happy New Year!	新年快樂	新年快乐	xin nian kuai le	shin nyen kwai luh
Hello.	你好	你好	ni hao	nee how
Good morning.	早安	早安	zao an	zow ahn
Good-bye.	再見	再见	zai jian	zai jan