THE WONDER DOUGH

One afternoon, Mark and Deena came rushing into the kitchen shouting, "Mom, we're hungry - what do you have for tea?"

Mommy smiles. "Not much really - but I have a surprise for you, anyway. Look at the table!"

Mark and Deena look at the table. There they see a big bowl. "What is it?" Deena asks.

"It's dough. It must rise, then I'll bake some buns for you."

"That's great," the children shout. "How many?"

"Let's wait and see. But here're some cookies for you." Mark and Deena sit down at the table, eating the cookies.

"What does it mean, that the dough must rise?" Mark asks.

"I know," Deena says. "It grows bigger and bigger, so that we can get a lot of buns. I'm already looking forward to them."

"I'll try that," says Mark and takes the bowl. "Come on!" The two children run out of the back door.

"If this dough grows bigger all the time, then it is a wonder dough," Mark shouts while they run through the grass.

"Wonder dough, wonder dough," they shout. "That's something!"

They jump over the fence to the neighboring farm and run into the pigsty.

"Look here, you old pig," Mark laughs. "We're gonna play with you." He takes a handful of the dough and throws it to the pig. They lean over the box and laugh while the pig munches the dough.

"Don't say anything," Mark says. "What's going on?" Deena asks. "Wait and see!"

They both stare at the pig. And, suddenly, it starts to grow. The stomach grows as big as a drum. The pig groans and snorts and lies down in the hay - growing all the time. At last it has grown so big that it is too big for the pigsty.

"Come on, let's go," Deena says. They run out of the pigsty and into the wood. They laugh all the time, throwing small lumps of dough all over. And, behind them, the trees are growing so tall that they reach the clear blue sky.

"Look," says Deena. She stops because she is out of breath.

"Look at that frog. Don't you think it is very hungry?"

Mark throws a small lump of the dough. The frog gobbles the dough and starts to grow in the very same moment. Soon he is as big as the children.

"Come on!" Mark shouts, laughing.

"We'd better run. He may grow so big that he will eat us."

They run toward their house. When they reach the edge of the wood, they stop to catch their breath. Mommy is hanging up the clothes in the yard, and the dog is standing at the door. Mark takes a lump of the dough and throws it to the dog. Mommy does not discover what he is doing, but the dog starts at once to eat the dough.

Just then, Mommy finishes her work. She takes the basket and walks back toward the house. Suddenly, she shouts, "What's that? What's wrong with the dog? It is so big that I cannot pass it!"

The children laugh. But when they see that Mommy is desperate, they start to weep, saying, "Mom - we have ---." But they cannot tell her.

"What's wrong?" Mommy asks.

"We have stolen your dough," Deena says.

"It was so exciting that it was able to rise," Mark says.

"I really should be angry with you. You must not steal my dough. But wouldn't you please take away that gigantic dog. I have to bring in my basket!"

Mark and Deena go happily, because Mommy did not get angry with them this time. So they run to pull away the big, fat dog. But they succeed in slipping in to see if Mommy is really not angry.

"Don't be angry," Deena says. "We'll help you to make a new dough," Mark says.

Then they hear Mommy from the kitchen, "What's that now? You tell me crazy things! The dough is here - are you making fun with me?"

And quite right: the dough is standing on the table in its bowl.

"That's great," the children shout. "We'll get buns anyway!"

Per Jespersen