

## Fred and Kate

Fred and Kate were man and wife. They had not long been married.

One day Fred said, 'I am going into the fields, Kate; I shall be hungry when I come in, so have something good ready for dinner, and a cool draught to quench my thirst.'

"All right, Fred, I will have it ready for you when you come back."

When dinner-time approached, she took down a sausage from the chimney, put it into a frying pan with some butter, and placed it on the fire. The sausage began to frizzle and splutter, and Kate stood holding the pan lost in her thoughts.

Suddenly she said: "While the sausage is cooking, I might go down to the cellar to draw the beer." So she put the pan firmly on the fire and took a jug down to the cellar to draw the beer.

Kate watched the beer running in to the jug, and suddenly she said, "I don't believe the dog is tied up; it might get the sausage out of the frying pan and run off with it."

She was up the cellar stairs in a twinkling, but the dog had already got the sausage in his jaws and was just making off with it. Kate, who was very agile, ran after him, and chased him a good way over the fields. The dog, however, was quicker than she, and without letting go the sausage, he got right away.

"What is gone, is gone!" she said, and being tired out, she turned back and walked slowly home to cool herself.

In the meantime, the beer had been running out of the cask because Kate had forgotten to turn the tap. As soon as the jug was full, the rest ran all over the cellar floor, till the cask was quiet empty.

Kate saw what had happened as soon as she got to the top of the cellar stairs. "Humph!" she cried, "what am I to do now so that Fred shan't discover it?"

She thought a while and at last she remembered a sack of fine meal they had left over from the last fair. She would fetch it down and strew it over the beer. "To be sure," she said, "those who save at the right time have something when they need it."

So she went up to the loft and brought the sack down, but, unfortunately, she threw it right on to the jug full of beer. It was overturned, and away went Fred's drink, flooding the cellar with the rest.

"Oh, that won't matter!" said Kate. "When part is gone, the rest may as well follow." Then she strewed the meal all over the cellar. She was delighted with her handiwork when it was finished and said, "How clean and fresh it looks."

At dinnertime Fred came home. "Well, wife, what have you got for dinner?" he said.