

HOW NED STROUTER
AN HIS WIFE
DONE THA GEAM-KEEPER

When Ned wur got woold, an terrible decriped wie tha rehumatiz, as a wur a martyr to, be za much layen about at nite in tha damp, no biddy diden keer ta employ un; an twur main baddish times wie ee an his wife. One afternoon a zaays to her, “Kit,” a zaays, “hast a got ar bit a mate in house?” “Not a mossel,” zaays she, “nuthen bit a bit a brade an cheese, an zom drippen;” “well,” a zaays, “tis a longish time zunce I teasted ar bit a geam, bit be dang if I dwoant av a try var zom ta nite.” “Drat tha feller,” zaays she, “tha keepers ull av thee, if thee'se ony show thee nose on tha down, ar up gean tha copse; thee'se know thay will.” “Never thee mine that,” a zaays, “begar if I dwoant chance it, let it be how twill.” Zoo went wur dark, a gooes an puts down a wire, in a hare's run, on tha down, jist between tha road an tha copse. Nex marnin a zaays, “now Kit, I da veel zartin zure ther's a hare cotch'd in thic ar wire; if ther is I shaant perseen ta notice un, bit shill keep on waaken rite up auver tha down; tha keeper ull be zartin zure ta be hiden zomewhere, expectin ta zee I com an teak un out; wen a vinds I dwoant goo nighst un bit da keep waakin on, he'll be zure ta vollie I, thinkin I've got zom mwore wires put down vurder on. Zoo as zoon as I be gone, thee vollie on wie tha rush basket, ael up tha road, an when thee'se zee ess bouth goo auver tha hill an out a zite, pop droo hedge, nab tha hare, an get wom we un, as vast as thee laigs ull carry thee.” Zoo off went Ned, wie bouth hands in his pocket, an whistlin var tha life

on un ael up tha road an out on tha down; an wen a got about twenty yards a tha pleace he cood zee, zure enuff, a vine girt hare in tha wire; an, zure enuff too, tha keeper wur hiden in tha copse cloas by, thinkin ta rush out an collar Ned in tha a teakin on un out; bit tha crafty woold baiger diden perseen ta notice un, bit went strait on ael up auver tha down, as tho a wur looken var musherrooms, an tha keeper a dodgen on un. Wen thay wur bouth got auver tha hill out a zite, Kit, who wur down in tha road wie her eyes wide open, slips droo hedge an out to tha down, an in a jiffy nabs tha hare, an purty quick wur on her way wom wie un, rejoicin. Wen Ned thought twur about time Kit had a done tha trick, a zallys back agean, bit took proper good keer not ta goo handy tha pleace wur tha hare wur cotch'd; bit at once mead strait var his own cottage. Wen tha keeper who wur watchen an dodgen on un ael tha time zeed this, a gooes down ta teak tha hare out hissself, an you mid well gace his look a zaprize when a vound tha hare an wire too, clane gone. Twur a puzzle to un ael his life, an a twould tha Squire ther wur mwore poachers about, bezides woold Ned Strouter, bit be dang if he cood ever run across em tho.