

Scissors They Were

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Italian

Easy
3 min read

nce upon a time there was a husband and a wife. The husband was a tailor; so was the wife, and in addition was a good housekeeper. One day the husband found some things in the kitchen broken,—pots, glasses, plates. He asked: “How were they broken?” “How do I know?” answered the wife. “What do you mean by saying ‘how do I know?’ Who broke them?” “Who broke them? I, with the scissors,” said the wife, in anger. “With the scissors?” “With the scissors!” “Are you telling the truth? I want to know what you broke them with. If you don’t tell me, I will beat you.” “With the scissors!” (for she had the scissors in her hand). “Scissors, do you say?” “Scissors they were!” “Ah! what do you mean? Wait a bit; I will make you see whether it was you with the scissors.”

So he tied a rope around her and began to lower her into the well, saying: "Come, how did you break them? You see I am lowering you into the well." "It was the scissors!" The husband, seeing her so obstinate, lowered her into the well; and she, for all that, did not hold her tongue. "How did you break them?" said the husband. "It was the scissors." Then her husband lowered her more, until she was half way down. "What did you do it with?" "It was the scissors." Then he lowered her until her feet touched the water. "What did you do it with?" "It was the scissors!" Then he let her down into the water to her waist. "What did you do it with?" "It was the scissors!" "Take care!" cried her husband, enraged at seeing her so obstinate, "it will take but little to put you under the water. You had better tell what you did it with; it will be better for you. How is it possible to break pots and dishes with the scissors! What has become of the pieces, if they were cut?" "It was the scissors! the scissors!"

Then he let go the rope. Splash! his wife is all under the water. "Are you satisfied now? Do you say any longer that it was with the scissors?" The wife could not speak any more, for she was under the water; but what did she do? She stuck her hand up out of the water, and with her fingers began to make signs as if she were cutting with the scissors. What could the poor husband do? He said: "I am losing my wife, and then I shall have to go after her. I will pull her out now, and she may say that it was the scissors or the shears." Then he pulled her out, and there was no way of making her tell with what she had broken all those things in the kitchen.

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