

William Allingham (1824-89)

4 *The Milkmaid*

(To the tune of "It was an old Beggarman.")

O where are you going so early? he said;
Good luck go with you, my pretty maid;
To tell you my mind I'm half afraid,
 But I wish I were your sweetheart.
 When the morning sun is shining low, 5
 And the cocks in every farmyard crow,
 I'll carry your pail,
 O'er hill and dale,
 And I'll go with you a-milking.

I'm going a-milking, sir, says she, 10
Through the dew, and across the lea;
You ne'er would even yourself to me,
 Or take me for your sweetheart.
 When the morning sun is shining low,
 And the cocks in every farmyard crow, 15
 I'll carry your pail,
 O'er hill and dale,
 And I'll go with you a-milking.

Now give me your milking-stool awhile,
To carry it down to yonder stile; 20
I'm wishing every step a mile,
 And myself your only sweetheart.
 When the morning sun is shining low,
 And the cocks in every farmyard crow,
 I'll carry your pail, 25
 O'er hill and dale,
 And I'll go with you a-milking.

O, here's the stile in-under the tree,
And there's the path in the grass for me,
And I thank you kindly, sir, says she, 30
 And wish you a better sweetheart.

When the morning sun is shining low,
And the cocks in every farmyard crow,
I'll carry your pail,
O'er hill and dale, 35
And I'll go with you a-milking.

Now give me your milking-pail, says he,
And while we're going across the lea,
Pray reckon your master's cows to me,
Although I'm not your sweetheart. 40

When the morning sun is shining low,
And the cocks in every farmyard crow,
I'll carry your pail,
O'er hill and dale,
And I'll go with you a-milking. 45

Two of them red, and two of them white,
Two of them yellow and silky bright,
She told him her master's cows aright,
Though he was not her sweetheart. 50

When the morning sun is shining low,
And the cocks in every farmyard crow,
I'll carry your pail,
O'er hill and dale,
And I'll go with you a-milking.

She sat and milk'd in the morning sun, 55
And when her milking was over and done,
She found him waiting, all as one
As if he were her sweetheart.

When the morning sun is shining low,
And the cocks in every farmyard crow, 60
I'll carry your pail,
O'er hill and dale,
And I'll go with you a-milking.

He freely offer'd his heart and hand;
Now she has a farm at her command, 65
And cows of her own to graze the land;
Success to all true sweethearts!

When the morning sun is shining low,

And the cocks in every farmyard crow,
I'll carry your pail 70
O'er hill and dale,
And I'll go with you a-milking.

1877

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