In a bustling market town, there was a mischievous shopkeeper’s apprentice named Kai. He delighted in fabricating tales to amuse himself. One sweltering afternoon, he climbed onto a rooftop and bellowed, “Fire! Fire! The granary is ablaze!” The townsfolk, busy tending their stalls, dropped their wares and sprinted toward the supposed flames. But as they arrived, Kai doubled over in glee, shouting, “No smoke here, fools! Just a jest!” The crowd, red-faced with anger, returned to their work, muttering curses.

Days later, Kai repeated his trick, crying, “Fire! The dye house burns!” Again, the townsfolk rushed to help, only to find Kai laughing amidst the intact buildings. “You’ve squandered our trust,” the blacksmith growled, as the crowd dispersed, vowing to ignore him henceforth.

Weeks passed. A genuine disaster struck: a lightning strike ignited the timber-framed inn. Kai, trapped inside, screamed for help, “Fire! Fire! Help me!” His voice cracked with terror. The townsfolk, however, stood at a distance, their faces etched with sorrow. “We cannot risk our lives for a liar,” the baker sighed. The flames consumed the inn, and Kai perished in the inferno.