

Story 797 (1976 Tape 1)

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The Padişah's ^{ju} Youngest Son, the Giant, and the Black Cat

Time within time, when the sieve was in the hay,¹
there was a padişah who had ~~three~~ sons. This padişah loved
the youngest of his sons the most, and for that reason, the
two older brothers had grown very ^{jealousy} jealous of their younger
brother.

There was a giant who had for some time been perse-
cuting the people of their city and doing great damage to
property there. The people of the city had long complained
about the outrages committed by this monster. Finally the
oldest son of the padişah said, "Father, I shall kill that
giant!" He had for some time been thinking, "If I can kill
the giant, then perhaps my father would love me more than
he does his youngest son."

Taking his sword, he left the palace and began walking.
He walked and walked and walked, traveling over hill and

¹ A very small part of a much longer tekerleme (story-
opening nonsense rhymes).

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dale,² until at last he arrived at the mouth of the deep ^{Cave} pit in which the giant lived. He waited there for the giant to come out. When the giant did come out, making a terrible noise as he came, the sight of him terrified the oldest brother so much that he simply fled.

Then the middle son of the padişah said, "Father, I want to go and kill that giant." He went to the pit mouth and waited for the giant. But when the giant came to the surface, making a terrible noise as he came, the sight of him frightened the middle son as it had his older brother, and he too fled.

Finally the youngest son of the padişah said, "Father, I am the only one left to try to kill the giant." He went to the pit and waited. When the giant came up, making a terrible noise as he came, the youngest brother stood fast. As soon as the giant's head showed above the surface of the ground, he cut it off with a single blow.

The people of the city rejoiced over the destruction of the giant. The padişah was very pleased with the achievement of this youngest son whom he had always loved most.

² Part of formulaic description of lengthy travel in quest tales, this is out of place here.

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All three of these brothers had been interested in the daughter of the padişah of a neighboring country. The father now considered asking for the hand of this princess for his youngest son. As he thought about it, however, he realized how much trouble this might cause in his household. He changed his mind and decided instead to have all three sons married in a way that would not offend any of them.

Calling his three sons to the throne, the padişah said to them, "It is time now that you are married. I shall give an arrow to each of you. You will shoot that arrow, and wherever it lands, it will indicate your kismet,³ for I shall ask for the hand of any girl who lives there for you." His three sons agreed with this arrangement.

The oldest brother shot his arrow. It landed on the roof of a large house in the neighborhood. After the usual formalities, one of the daughters of that household was married to the prince.

When the middle brother shot his arrow, it also landed on the roof of a house owned by a prominent and affluent family. The padişah was pleased to make the necessary arrangements for a marriage between his middle son and a young girl of that family.

³ Lot, fortune, fate.

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Finally it was the turn of the youngest son. He his arrow so far that it went completely out of the neighborhood near the palace. It went so far that he had to walk some distance to find it. When he did find it, he discovered that it was stuck into the roof of a small cottage in the woods.

The

woman who answered his knock, "Grandmother, do you have any daughters?"

"No, Son," she answered, "but I have a black cat. If you wish, I can give her to you.

The youngest son thought, "This apparently is my kismet. I cannot go against my father's wish, and so I had better accept the black cat as my wife." Taking the cat, he returned to the palace. When he arrived there, he began to think very sadly about what he could do with a wife who was a cat. His two elder brothers were, of course, amused and very pleased with his kismet.

Later, while the youngest brother was sitting in room and thinking very deeply about his situation, the black cat stretched, shook herself twice, and turned into a very beautiful girl with glossy black hair and a beautiful black velvet dress. The youngest son was amazed and

*Stronger in
Superstition*

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delighted at how beautiful she was.

At the request of the two older sons, the padişah arranged for a large banquet with many guests. These two older brothers wanted this occasion to embarrass their younger brother and improve their own positions. Each of them thought, "When our father sees us with pretty women as wives but our little brother with only a black cat, he will shift his affection to us."

When the youngest son discovered why his brothers had wanted this banquet, he decided to play a mean trick of his own on them. The dinner party was held at the palace, and everybody of importance was invited to attend. The three brothers and their wives were all seated at the head table. As the youngest brother was eating, he pretended to put half his food inside his suit. Seeing him do this, the two elder brothers did the same.

After the banquet was finished, dancing began. When the two older brothers moved out on the dance floor and started to dance, all of the food that they had stored in their clothing began to fall out and scatter on the floor.

The guests were shocked at this, and the padişah felt disgraced. Then, becoming angry, he drove his older sons from his side

When the youngest son came out to dance, jewels and

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gold coins fell from his clothing, and the padişah was very pleased at what he saw. He held a wedding ceremony for his youngest son that lasted for forty days and forty nights. He and his bride had their wishes fulfilled. Let us go up and sit in their seats ⁴

*Tales and
Stories*

⁴ In traditional rural Turkey the place where a guest is seated is an indication of status, the most prestigious position being exactly opposite the entrance. This commonly used terminal formula for tales apparently refers to that social custom.