

Story 1067 (1972 Tape 7) Narrator: Esma Koca

Location: Seyran village,  
Karacabey kaza,  
Bursa Province

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A Stolen Child Becomes a Thief

There was once a padişah who had no children. As  
 he and his wife grew older, they became desperate to have  
 a child. They finally secured a baby who had been stolen.

When this baby grew into girlhood, she became a  
 thief. This was because she herself had been stolen. When  
 she went to elementary school she stole a pencil one day.  
 On another day she stole a book. Every day she stole some-  
 thing. The teacher felt that he could not complain about  
 this, for the student was the padişah's daughter. But  
 after this had been going on for some time, the teacher  
 lost his patience and complained to the authorities.

When this was reported to the padişah, he was so  
 greatly embarrassed by it that he said, "Alas!" and died.

One day one of the viziers said to his wife, "Let us  
 invite our former padişah's wife to have dinner with us."

The vizier's wife agreed to this and began preparing  
 the food. Wishing to prepare some dough, she took off her  
 diamond ring and laid it upon a table in the kitchen. When  
 the former padişah's wife and daughter came to dinner, the  
 ring was still on the kitchen table, and the child took

## Story 1067

this ring. The next day the vizier's wife went to the wife of the former padişah and asked for her ring. She said, "Your daughter is just a child. Perhaps she took it."

The girl heard this and said, "Yes, I took it, and I shall not give it back to you." The mother was so mortified by this incident that she grew ill, and before long she too died. After that the girl lived with her dadı.<sup>1</sup>

One day the girl said, "Dadı, let me go out for a while. I shall return soon."

The dadı answered, "Don't go, my daughter. You made so much trouble that you caused your mother to die. Do you want to kill me too?"

But this did not affect the girl at all. She went out and went to the home of the vizier. There she said "Sembil and Zümbül send their greetings to you, and they invite you to come to dinner tonight. Here is the address of their house."

The vizier and his family went to her home, carrying with them a number of expensive gifts. When they arrived for dinner, the girl served them coffee containing a strong

<sup>1</sup>The term for a children's nursemaid in Turkey. The term lala referred in earlier times to a manservant who cared for a boy. Lala was a term used for such a person who worked for a very wealthy, aristocratic, or royal family. People of even very modest means might have a servant known as a dadı.

Story 1067

drug. After drinking the coffee, they all fell down unconscious. She then placed all of them in large bags and called a porter. "Take these bags to the padişah's palace Be careful with them, because the contents can be broken."

When the bags arrived at the palace, the new padişah said, "Let us look in these bags and see what they contain." When he discovered that they contained the vizier and his family, the padişah was angry at the vizier for such behavior. When the vizier apologized, however, the padişah forgave him.

On the following day the girl went again to the vizier's house and said, "Sembil and Zümbül have invited you to dinner."

The bad experience of the day before had not affected these people very much. They said among themselves, "Let us go there again, but this time let us not drink any of that coffee." When evening came they went to the girl's house again

This time the girl had actually prepared a dinner but she put the drug in the food rather than in the coffee. When the guests ate the food, they all fell down unconscious. Stripping off their clothes this time, she placed them in bags again and then called a porter. "Take these bags to the padişah's palace, but be careful with them, for their contents can be broken

## Story 1067

After the bags had been taken away, the girl took a walk through the city. As she was walking, she saw a young man who had just returned from Mecca. He was still wearing his ihram<sup>2</sup> garment. She went home immediately, got out a similar ihram robe for women, and dressed herself in that. Returning to where she had seen the pilgrim, she began to follow him. She followed him to his house, and because everyone there was very busy, she walked right into the house after him.

Pilgrim 105-7  
105, 107

The young man said to his family, "I am very tired and shall lie down to sleep for a while."

After the young man had gone to sleep, his sister noticed the girl and asked, "What are you doing here? When did you enter the house?"

"Your brother brought me here."

They then asked her, "What is your name?"

"My name is Ördek,"<sup>3</sup> she said.

Shortly afterwards when the young man awakened, he saw the girl and asked, "How did you get in here?"

She answered, "Your mother brought me into this house while you were away."

<sup>2</sup>The ihram is a seamless woollen robe worn by pilgrims at Mecca. It has a hole in the center through which the head can pass. The dialect form ehram is used here.

<sup>3</sup>The word means duck, a most unlikely name for a girl.

Story 1067

"What will you do here?" he asked her

"I shall be your hands and arms while you are sleeping."

"All right," said the young man, and he lay down and went to sleep again. After he was deep in sleep, the girl opened his saddlebag and removed from it all of the things that he had brought from Mecca. Stealing all these things, she left the house without being observed.

The next day the young man asked his mother, "Why did you bring that girl into our home?"

"I didn't invite her," she said. "You were the one who brought her into this house.

"What a bother! What will happen now?" asked her daughter

The mother said, "That girl is named Karibe Sultan.<sup>4</sup> She has given a great amount of trouble to the grand vizier and his family. Everyone is talking about it. Let us go and complain about her to a kadı."<sup>5</sup> 106-107

When they made a complaint about her thefts to the kadı, that official called her to his court. After she

<sup>4</sup>It is obviously a narrative failure to have the principal character's name mentioned only at the end of the tale.

<sup>5</sup>The kadı was the pre-Republic judge of Moslem canonical law.

Story 1067

had arrived there, the kadı questioned her about the various thefts of which she had been accused. "I have them all, and I shall return them," she said. "Give me two porters to carry them here." She was given two porters, and in a short time she led them back heavily loaded.

"Because you are an orphan, I shall forgive you for these offenses on the condition that you will never steal again," said the kadı.

Karibe Sultan agreed to this. She then said, "Now I want to marry this pilgrim who has just returned from Mecca. Please give us permission to be married."<sup>6</sup>

After a while they were actually married. They are still married and they are very happy.

<sup>6</sup>This is hardly the way that either proposals or marriage arrangements are made. Apparently there has been some truncating of the tale here.