

Story 1840 (1969 Tape 3)

Narrator: Müslim Yarar

Location: Alıçık village,
Bayburt kaza,
Gümüşhane Province

Some time after taping
of this tale, Bayburt
became the capital of a
new province of the
same name.

Date: July 1969

Recorded by Dr. Saim Sakaoğlu

A Royal Elopement

One day a long time afterwards¹ Mehmet Bey was wandering through a marketplace when he met the son of a shepherd who looked very much like him. They were both very handsome men. After they had talked for awhile, Mehmet Bey said, “Son of a shepherd, let us become brothers.”

“But you are a prince, and I am the son of a shepherd. How can you be my brother?”

“That is quite all right,” said Mehmet Bey. “Allah created both you and me.”

¹This tale and the immediately previous ATON tale are linked by the character Mehmet Bey. But the very slight plot of this tale has nothing else that connects it to the plot of ATON 1839.

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“Yes, that is right,” answered the son of a shepherd, and the two became brothers.

One day the padishah of Yemen died, and his son, Mehmet Bey, was notified of this. The news reached Mehmet Bey, and with it came a letter saying, “Return to your own country and ascend the throne.” Mehmet Bey therefore began to make preparations to leave Istanbul.

In the meantime Mehmet Bey’s friend, the son of the shepherd, had fallen in love with the daughter of the padishah of Istanbul. Their situation, however, was difficult. As the young man explained, “I cannot ask your father for your hand. If I should do that, he would say that he would never permit his daughter to marry the son of a shepherd.”

The girl said, “My father is very fond of Mehmet Bey, the prince of Yemen.² If we could get his help, my father might be persuaded to give me to you.”

The son of the shepherd said, “Mehmet Bey is a friend of mine. He is like a brother.”

“Oh-h-h-h, in that case our situation could be made much easier. Go and find Mehmet Bey and tell him about our problem.”

²The padishah was fond of Mehmet Bey because (in the preceding tale) the latter had solved one of the two great problems in the padishah of Istanbul’s earlier life.

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The son of the shepherd went to Mehmet Bey and told him of his hopeless courtship of the padishah's daughter. After thinking about this matter, Mehmet Bey said, "I cannot very well ask the padishah to give his daughter to the son of a shepherd. My father has just died, and I am now about to return to Yemen to assume his throne. I advise you to remain as close as possible to the padishah's daughter so that you will have her with you when the time comes for you to run away. People will observe this, of course, and they may report your closeness to her father. By the time you have to flee Istanbul, I shall have become padishah of Yemen. Come directly to Yemen, where the two of you can be married and live in my palace.

As Mehmet Bey had predicted, people noticed that the princess and the son of the shepherd were frequently together. Some of them went to the palace and reported this. They said, "Our padishah, your daughter seems to be very close to the son of a shepherd much of the time.

When the padishah heard this, he ordered his attendants, "Bring the son of the shepherd to me! I shall have his head cut off!"

When the son of the shepherd learned that he was wanted at the palace, he understood the meaning of that summons. He and the princess of Istanbul fled to Yemen, where they lived thereafter in the palace of Mehmet Bey, the new padishah of Yemen.