

Story 2004 (1969 Tape 14)

Narrator: Şahadet Göl, 80

Location: Tokat, capital of Tokat Province; but taped in Erzurum by Dr. Saim Sakaoğlu

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### The Girl Disguised as a Goat

When the wife of a certain padishah died, she left among her belongings a bracelet. The woman had been very slender, and so the bracelet was unusually small in diameter. After he had recovered from mourning, the padishah announced that he would remarry but only to a person on whose wrist the bracelet would fit exactly. Many women came to the palace and tried on the bracelet, but it did not fit any of them. One day, however, a servant informed him that the bracelet was just the right size for his daughter. Testing it on the girl's wrist, he found that this was true.

The next day the padishah went to a müfti<sup>1</sup> and asked, "Is a person permitted to eat the fruit of a tree which he has grafted?"

"Yes, of course he is!" answered the müfti.

After receiving this assurance from the müfti, the padishah decided to marry his daughter. He thought, "She is, after all, the only female who can wear comfortably her mother's bracelet." Returning to

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<sup>1</sup>A müfti (English mufti) is an authority on Muslim law.

Story 2004

his palace at once, he informed the girl, "The müfti said that it would be quite all right for you to be my wife, and so I intend to marry you."

The girl was shocked, but she said only, "I should like to have some time to myself before that." She then went to the shop of a furrier and had made for herself a goat costume complete with horns and hooves. When it had been completed, she dressed in it and looked quite like a real goat.

On the evening before she was to be married to her father, the girl dressed in her goat costume and ran away. She did not know where she was going, but she continued walking until she came to another palace. Outside that palace was a barrel into which people threw leftover food. The girl had eaten nothing since leaving home, and so she was very hungry. She went to the waste barrel, picked up a bone that still had some meat on it, and began licking it.

One of the servants came out of the palace and saw a goatlike creature doing this. The servant went back into the palace and called his wife. He said to her, "I just saw a goatlike creature licking a bone."

Both the servant and his wife then went outside, and the wife said to the girl disguised as a goat, "Who are you? What are you doing here?"

The girl replied, "I am a very poor human being with no place to live."

Story 2004

The wife of the servant asked, "Would you like to live with us?"

"Yes."

"What type of work can you do? Can you clean and wash?"

"No."

"Can you rock a cradle?"

"Yes, I can rock a cradle," answered the girl, and she then began living with the servant and his wife. Day after day she rocked the cradles of babies brought to her.

One day there was a wedding party in the palace. The servant and his wife were invited to it, and they took the girl along with them. For that occasion the girl removed her goat costume and wore regular female clothing. Among the members of the royal family who hosted the party was a young prince who looked but once at the girl before falling madly in love with her. He went to the girl, gave her a ring, and asked, "Where do you live?"

She answered, "I was just passing through this area, and I do not live here." She then left quickly and returned to the servant quarters, where she changed back into her goat costume.

On the following day the prince announced that he was going to search for the girl he had seen at the party. He had saddled two horses, one for himself and one for the girl he hoped to find. As he

Story 2004

was preparing to leave, the wife of the servant baked a cheese-filled pastry for him to take along on his journey. Just before the woman put it into the oven to bake, the girl secretly slipped into the pastry the ring which the prince had given her.

After riding for some distance, the prince grew hungry and stopped to eat. When he took his first bite of the cheese pastry, the ring fell out. The prince recognized it at once as the ring he had given to the girl he was now seeking. He asked himself, "Who could have given this ring to the servant woman who baked this pastry for me? I wonder if there may not be something strange about the goat girl besides her appearance?" He thought about this during his ride home.

When he got back to the palace, he went to the servant quarters and said to the girl, "Furry, bring me a cup of water." When she returned with the water, he took a knife from his pocket and cut from the girl her goat costume. He found beneath this cover a girl as beautiful as an angel. When he asked her to marry him, the girl accepted his proposal. The padishah and his wife also admired the girl, and they arranged a wedding celebration that lasted for forty days and forty nights.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>This is a greatly truncated variant of the Aarne-Thompson international folktale type 510B—The Dress of Gold, of Silver, and of Stars (Cap o' Rushes).