

Story 1981 (1969 Tape 3)

Narrator: Beyaz Güleç

Location: Alçlık village, Bayburt kaza, Gümüşhane Province. (Since the time this tale was taped, Bayburt became the capital city of a new province of that same name.)

Date: July 1969

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The Youngest Daughter Acquires the Golden Bird of Kırazoğlu¹

There was once a man who was hired to build a palace for the padishah of his land. After working on the construction for a very long while, this man completed the kind of palace that the padishah had requested. When the ruler went to examine the new building, he said, “This palace that you have built for me is beautiful. It is so beautiful, in fact, that I must have as its central attraction the golden bird of Kırazoğlu. Go and get that bird for me.”

When the builder heard this command, he was shocked. How could he ever get the golden bird of Kırazoğlu for the padishah? He returned home slowly and sadly, wondering how he could fulfill the order of the padishah. When he arrived home, the builder’s oldest daughter looked at him and realized that he was upset about something.

¹Was there in history, legend, or literature a figure named Kırazoğlu, or was the name simply invented for this tale?

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She asked, "Father, why are you so restless and worried? What has caused you to become this way?"

The builder replied, "When the padishah came to see the new palace I had constructed for him, he said that it lacked just one thing: the golden bird of Kırazoğlu. He then ordered me to bring that bird to adorn his new palace. I have no idea about how to find the golden bird of Kırazoğlu and bring it to him. That is why I am so upset."

"Oh, I thought that you were probably deeply concerned about making arrangements for me to marry a suitable young man." Saying no more, she walked away from her father.

A few minutes later the middle daughter of the builder came along and asked, "Father, what are you so worried about?"

The builder answered, "When the padishah came to examine the new palace I had constructed for him, he said that it lacked just one thing: the golden bird of Kırazoğlu. He then ordered me to bring that bird to him. I do not know how to get that bird for him. That is why I am so upset."

"Oh, is that the difficulty? I supposed that you were concerned about the hole in my shoe which needs stitching."

Finally his youngest daughter came along and asked the builder the same question that her two older sisters had asked. The builder explained his problem to her, too. "When the padishah came to

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examine the new palace I had constructed for him, he said that it lacked just one thing: the golden bird of Kırazoğlu. He ordered me to get that bird to adorn his new palace. But I do not know how I can fulfill his order.”

“Father, give me a good horse and a suit of male clothing, and I shall get for you the golden bird of Kırazoğlu.” After he had provided what she had requested, she disguised herself as a young man. Then she rode away, followed by her pet dog. After discovering that Kırazoğlu lived in a remote area of her own country, she rode steadily until she reached his mansion. There she knocked on the front door.

Kırazoğlu was surprised to hear this knocking on his door. “Almost no one travels into this area. Who can it be who has now come to visit me?” He opened the door, and after some brief discussion, he invited the traveler to be a guest at his home. He did not at first suspect that his guest was a young woman instead of a young man.

After the youngest daughter had lived in Kırazoğlu’s home for a few days, she said to her host, “I have never been in this area before. Will you show me some of the interesting things here?”

“Yes,” answered Kırazoğlu. “Let us go hunting in the nearby mountains, and in our journeys there and back can show you what

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little there is to be seen here.” Taking along her powerful rifle,² she followed her host to the mountains. Her extremely accurate marksmanship impressed Kırazoğlu, but when he noticed the impression of a ring’s having been on her finger and the mark of a bracelet’s having been on her wrist, he concluded that his guest might be a woman and not the young man she seemed to be.

After they had returned from hunting, Kırazoğlu went to his mother and said, “Mother, when I saw that the finger of my guest was marked by her having worn a ring and that the guest’s wrist showed evidence of her having worn a bracelet, I wondered if that person was not a woman instead of a man. I began to feel the effect of love. But how can I discover for certain that she is female?”

Kırazoğlu’s mother replied, “Take your guest to the Pearl Mountain and observe how he or she behaves. A man will have little interest in pearls, but a woman will be excited by them and will gather many of them.”

The youngest daughter’s pet dog overheard this conversation and went at once to the youngest daughter to warn her. “When you are taken to the Pearl Mountain, you will see that the ground is covered with beautiful pearls. Restrain yourself from any desire you may have

²This is probably an anachronism. The international type of which this tale is a variant would seem to predate the use of firearms.

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for them, for Kırazoğlu will be watching you closely to determine from your actions whether you are male or female. Ignore the pearls. I shall roll on the ground there, and many of the pearls will become lodged in my thick fur. These I shall give to you upon our return from Pearl Mountain.”

When they reached Pearl Mountain, the youngest daughter said to Kırazoğlu, “Why did you bring me here? I am very bored here! I have no interest in pearls. Such things are for girls!” While she was saying this, however, her dog was rolling on the ground so that many pearls would be caught in its fur. These she later picked out of the dog’s fur.

Kırazoğlu went to his mother and said, “Mother, my guest showed no interest in the thousands of beautiful pearls on Pearl Mountain, but every time I look at the dent on his finger and the marks on his wrist, I am persuaded that the guest is a woman.”

“My son, here is another test which will reveal clearly whether your guest is male or female. Have her climb an aspen tree, and as she climbs, follow her closely. Then pretend that you are about to fall. As if to save yourself from falling, reach upward and grab the guest’s private parts. This will give you conclusive evidence as to whether the guest is male or female.”

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Again the youngest daughter's dog overheard the discussion between Kırazoğlu and his mother. It ran at once to the youngest daughter and reported to her the new plan for testing her gender. The girl said to the dog, "Go to a butcher shop and buy the male organs of a large ram. Then bring them to me at once." When these male parts of a ram arrived, she attached them firmly inside her clothing at the appropriate place.

Just as the dog had told her, the youngest daughter was soon invited to climb an aspen tree with Kırazoğlu. She accepted this invitation and began to climb. As Kırazoğlu climbed up behind her, he pretended to lose his grip on the tree and start falling. As he did so, he reached upward and grabbed the guest's private parts to steady himself.

After they had climbed down from the tree, Kırazoğlu went back to his mother and reported what had happened. He said to her, "That guest has bigger male organs than I do! But I keep thinking that that guest is a girl. The delicate finger bears the imprint of a ring, and the slender wrist bears the marks of a bracelet."

The mother of Kırazoğlu said, "Take that person to our private hamam.³ There you will discover the gender of our guest." It was in

³Hamam usually refers to a large public bath. There are still public baths in Turkey, but their number has decreased with the modernization that made it possible to have bathtubs and showers in most urban homes.

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that hamam that the golden bird was kept. Again her dog informed the youngest daughter of what Kırazoğlu planned to do

On the following day Kırazoğlu said to his guest, "Come let us bathe in the private hamam connected to our house. The youngest daughter accepted this invitation.

When they entered the hamam, Kırazoğlu undressed and began at once to bathe. But when the girl saw the golden bird in a cage there, she took it and started away. Before leaving, however, she wrote the following verse and placed it on the heap of Kırazoğlu's clothes

I came to this place in the summertime;

I am leaving it in the early fall

I came pretending to be a male

But I am leaving as a girl.

I am taking what I came to get.

Kırazoğlu, our bird is now mine

Then jumping on her horse, she rode away swiftly toward home with the small dog running along behind.

When Kırazoğlu finished bathing, he found himself alone in the hamam and the golden bird gone. Deciding at once to take vengeance against the youngest daughter, he filled his saddlebag with pearls and began searching for her. He looked for her in village after village until he finally found her. He rented a shop and pretended to be

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a jewelry merchant in that place. When the sisters of the youngest daughter heard about this new jeweler, they said to her, "There is now a pearl merchant in the village. Take this money and buy some pearls for yourself."

Realizing who the pearl merchant might be, the youngest sister answered, "I already have enough pearls. I do not need any more." In this way she avoided going near Kırazoğlu, but one day when she went to the market, he saw her and approached her. He told her that he was in love with her, and he went to her father and asked for her hand in marriage. The youngest daughter had no choice but to accept the marriage arrangements that her father made for her, but she delayed the wedding as long as she could.

Kırazoğlu bought some fabric and took it to a tailor to have a wedding gown made for his bride. But the girl made the tailor's job difficult by insisting that her gown be made of a very rare fabric which was not available in that village. The tailor searched elsewhere for that kind of fabric. He finally located some and then proceeded to sew her gown. She then said to Kırazoğlu, "I shall not marry you until you slaughter many sheep and feed their flesh to all the dogs in this community." After that she requested great quantities of gold, pearls, and other jewels. When all her demands had been fulfilled, she could

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not delay the wedding any longer. The two were therefore married after a long and expensive wedding celebration.

Kırazoğlu was really confused in his feelings about his bride. He admired her great beauty, but he could not control his anger against her. When he thought that he was alone, he said to himself, "I still want to kill that girl and drink three cups of her blood!" But the dog of the youngest daughter overheard this and reported it immediately to the girl. Once she knew what Kırazoğlu was going to do, she bought a large tulum,⁴ filled it with pekmez,⁵ and placed it in a box in the nuptial chamber before the two were to be taken together to that room.

When the two were led to the nuptial chamber by the bridal attendants, Kırazoğlu said to the youngest daughter, "You have tricked me in various ways, and you stole my golden bird while you were a guest in my home. Your deceptions have not only offended me but also damaged my reputation. I am now going to stab you and drink three cups of your blood, thus avenging myself against you and at the same time restoring my honor."

"I know that I have done unkind things to you, but please do me one last favor. Allow me to stand in the box in that corner so that I

⁴The skin of an animal fashioned into a large, waterproof bag.

⁵Pekmez is a thick, sweet syrup made by boiling down grape juice.

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shall not see you stab me.” Saying this, she stepped into the box, lifted the tulum, and held it in front of her body.

Kırazoğlu plunged his knife into the box, piercing the tulum. Drawing a cup of the liquid that gushed out, he took a swallow of it. He exclaimed, “How sweet is her blood! Alas, what a thing I have done! Such a sweet person might have made a fine wife for me! But now it is too late to think about that! A great opportunity has been lost.”

The youngest daughter then stepped out of the box and said, “Come, Kırazoğlu! All that has been lost is a tulum of pekmez! That matters not at all now that we are safely past our conflict.”

They ate and drank and had their wishes fulfilled. May all of us be as fortunate as they were.