

Story #334 (Tape #4, 1971)

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Location: Erzurum, Province of Erzurum

Date: 1971

The Stonecutter

TEK Turn off the fuel, for it should not burn. Let not misfortune happen through words. Let not the brave man's collar fall into the grasp of hands of an ignoble man. So God wills (Inşallah). It is the bird that is flying in the air, and its wings are twisting. You have played both the drum and the shrill pipe. I went to a Turkish bath, and the bath tub went to my neck. The Turkish bath owner does not have a washing bowl, and the person who fuels the fire of the Turkish bath does not have an axe. I saw there a woman making tea; she was pouring two glasses; but she did not have the middle piece of cloth to cover her body in the Turkish bath.¹

we have a better from later of this TEK. is another tale.

At the age of happiness, once upon a time, a young man was breaking stones from the hill, carrying them to his cart, and selling these stones in the market. All through his life he had worked thus, and one day while he was breaking the stone, two pieces, each as big as an egg, fell from the bank of stone. He saw that those stones did not glisten. They did not look like the regular stones.

There is a saying that was left to us from our grandfathers: the value of the gold can be known only by the jeweler. What does a shepherd

¹ Apparently this first paragraph is a tekerleme, a nonsense jingle to introduce the tale. If so, then the usual repetitions, rhymes and near rhymes, and exaggerated rhythm have been lost. The paragraph should be re-translated with the conventions of the tekerleme in mind.

Proved

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know about gold? The ^{stone breaker} jeweler knows it.

This man, who did not know the value of his stones, this young man, put those two stones in his bosom, and finally, after loading his cart to the top, arrived in the city. After selling his stones, he went in front of a jewelery shop. He took one of the stones from his bosom and showed it to the jeweler.

"Would you look at this?"

The jeweler, after seeing the real stone in the hands of that poor man, realized that although it was a stone, it was also a rare jewel.

He asked, "Where did you get this?"

This young man had never told all through his life. All through his life he had always spoken in accurate language and told the truth. So

is the truth. Let us be honest. Let us make our words, our soul, and ourselves accurate at the beginning, and then honesty will continue from there. People believe the words that come out of the mouth. Everybody might believe, but God does not always believe; he knows everything. God knows goodness and honesty. For this reason we should be seen as we really are among people.

We should be known as we are. Our language, our opinions, our hearts should not be different from each other. They should be weighed in the same scale

the same weight. Then the young man, the stone breaker, giving an accurate answer to the jeweler, said, "While I was breaking stone, it came out of the stone. I have another one," and he showed it also.

The jeweler, however, was also an honest man. To the young man, to the stone breaker, he said, "Young man, this stone has no known value. I have showed this to me, but do not show it to anyone else except the king."

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of our time. Only the king can buy this. Do not show it to the other jewelers, for they are ^{unable} to pay the proper price for it." After giving enough money to his family to live on, he asked himself where he should take those precious stones.

He said, "I might give them to the king of Yemen, for he is the ruler of this land."

He put on his shoes and went on his way. While he was walking along he approached two old men. He saluted them.

The two old dervishes said, "Hey, young man, where are you going?"

These two dervishes' tongues were reciting a prayer from the Koran. They had strings of religious beads in their hands and they talked piously. *prayer beads* *very fake*

As we told you, this young man had never told a lie all his life but always the truth. "Father dervishes, I am going to Yemen."

"Why?" they asked.

"This is the reason. I am a poor stone breaker. I used to break stones and sell them. Two precious stones came out of one stone. The jewelers of our time could not pay the price for them. They said that I should take them to the king of our time. I am taking the precious stone to the city of Yemen."

"Can we see them, young man? We should also see the jewels."

The young man took the stones out of his bosom. In order to make old men happy, he showed them the stones. "Here they are, sir."

The old men looked at the stones. Yes. Inwardly they said, "Ah." Returning the stone, ^{said} outwardly, "I bless them for you, for their strength was not sufficient to take the stones from the hand of this young man in this situation."

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precious stones, he will say to me, 'They came with you. They are your friends.

can I do?' Nobody will believe me. Nobody will believe that the old man are thieves. My true words will be their lie; their lie will go farther and my truth will be left behind.

out from their mouths." (There are such people among us. They show themselves to the public as somebody else, but we do not know what is hidden inside them. There are people among us who are like this. There are too many men running to betray the people. Therefore, the young man did not tell his secret. He acted as if he still had the stones in his bosom. When it was morning, he together with the old men, were bidden farewell from the of the host

The old men said, "We are sorry, but we do not think we shall continue avel with you

When they said that, the young man did not surrender his collar to them.

I have the stones, in my bosom, but you already have committed yourselves. You are the guides of maturity. It is necessary that you should go with me to the doors of Yemen city. I cannot leave you until then, but it is up to you as to whether or not you should go to the presence of the king. It is just that since you told me that you were going to the city of Yemen you should enter the city doors with me. It is necessity. It is up to you as to your going with me to the palace of the king. I shall not force you to go there."

What was purpose His purpose was to take t to t cit

Bismillah is a shortened form of Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, meaning "in the name of the most merciful God." It is a word used audibly or silently by devout Moslems before starting any undertaking, great or small. It is a of indicating "I begin this act by mentioning the name of God as a sign of respect."

have them arrive in the city. Finally, with this and that, he compelled the old men to appear at the gates of Yemen. They entered the city.

"us rest for a while," he said, and took the old men to a coffee house. Secretly, he called the coffee house owner to him and said, "These men are entrusted to you in the name of God. Do not let them go until I return. These men seem to be very fond of money."

The coffee house owner agreed to this, and the stone breaker left the place. He then prepared an application.³ To whom? To the king.

"O, my king. I was a stone breaker. I sold stones after breaking them. One day, while I was breaking stones, I found two precious jewels in one of them. The jewelers of our time could not pay the price of their worth when I showed them the stones. They should be the property of a king like you, they said. As I was coming to your place, I met two old dervises. They became traveling companions with me. I accepted them as being honest as I am. But they stole the stones from my bosom while I was sleeping. The word thief in the language of the people does not fit their appearance. If I report this, I know that nobody will believe me. Whoever comes will say to me, 'you are wrong,' and to the old men, 'you are right,' because appearances would make it that way. But I wish my problem to be solved by you. I want my stones for you. Send the policemen to that coffee house and have the three of us taken to your presence."

giving such an explanation to the king, he straightway returned to the coffee house. When he approached the old men, they wanted to run

³ Although awed and often confused by the forms and paper work involved in any transaction with an agency of the government, peasants are impressed also. Hence, to get his information to the king, the stonecutter must file an application.

away. But the coffee house owner did not let them go. "Your friend left you under my protection. Until he comes, I will not let you go."

When the young man arrived at the coffee house, the police surrounded the place. By the order of the king, the three of them were seized and were taken to the king's presence. While the application was being read, they were in another

What can we do if the stones do not come out from the bosoms of the thieves. These old men seem righteous, but how are they inside? Thus there is another truth here. There are men with long hair and beards who make themselves seem attractive to people. But their behavior is different from that of others. Man believes; man trusts; but God knows.

The king had a daughter twelve years old. This girl was sitting next to her father. Thus, I say, wisdom is not dependent on one's age but on one's head. "O, my father, the king, judge them in the court of wisdom, in the court of real power."

When she said this, the father king became annoyed. "O, little girl, how in the world can the court of wisdom, the court of real power handle this? Why did you utter these words, my daughter?" said the king.

The girl said, "Do not be angry, my father, the king. If you leave this problem to me, I will reveal the true natures of these three men to you."

The king hesitated for a while when he heard these proper words of his daughter. "How will you do it?"

"Leave the problem with me and do not interfere. Now I shall make them talk for your sake with the authority of your name."

She gave orders, and the three of them were brought in before the king. The girl stood next to her father. First she said to the old men "O, dervish fathers, come here. Listen to what my king father says. 'We shall treat the poor men who come before me for three days and nights as our guests. Whatever bread and food we eat, whatever service we have, we shall give the same to them. On the fourth night, after giving some money to these guests, we shall say farewell to them with pleasure.' This is the order of my father, the king. You are our guests for three days. We shall give you the same food and drink as we are eating and drinking. On the fourth day, my father, the king, will say goodbye to you. Now you are our guests for three days, in the name of God."

She gave orders, and the three of them were taken to separate rooms. Thus they separated the old men and also the stone breaker from each other. Each one was left alone in a single room. The girl said to her father, "Please give me permission for three days, O, my father, the king. Thus through your name and your authority I am going to judge them in the court of wisdom and in the court of real power, but after a short while."

"Very well, my daughter, do as you like. There must be something hidden in this. I have never heard of the court of wisdom or the court of real power. But, whoever comes into this world also departs from this world."

To the three men the girl assigned maid servants. To the old men's maids she said, "Girls, when you enter the rooms of these old men in order to give them water, coffee, or food, act coquettishly. See how these old men act. But you should inform me of their action."

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"When I open the door and enter the room, this young man stares at the floor. He does not look at my face, because he is shy. If you put three of us together and ask him which was your maid, he might not recognize me. Why? Since he does not look at my face, how could he recognize me?"

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"Go ahead and continue to do your work."

After having the maids serve for three nights as such, the girl was convinced that the hearts of the old men were full of dirt. She also was convinced of how proper the stone breaker was.

The truth is a door which opens a way to the heart. The hearts of people are known only by God and by nobody else. But propriety and virtue reflect the truth that is born in the heart. It reflects the heart, although nobody else knows the heart of man as does God. Thus, consider this deep truth well, for it reveals--here how dirty their hearts were. It reveals such signs.

Then, on the fourth day, the girl, who now understood what kind of men those old men and the stone breaker were, ~~and~~ had them brought before her father. The two old men and the stone breaker were standing alone. After standing up by the side of her father, she said to one of the old men, "O, dervish father, come here. I will tell you something."

right, my girl, I shall come."

He came in front of the girl.

"O, old father."

my girl." The old man was very experienced.

"I am going to tell you something that happened a long time ago. You are a recognized old man. Give an answer to my question."

"Yes, my girl," said the old man.

"O, dervish father, O, old man. Once upon a time, a king's daughter, like myself, had a garden keeper. Are you listening to me, father?"

"Yes, I am listening."

Not only the old man, but a thousand men in the king's court were also listening. They gazed at the maturity of the girl.

"Yes, this girl's garden keeper was working loyally for the girl's flower garden and yard. Fifteen years passed by like this. It happened, dervish father, that her luck changed, and she was engaged to the son of another king. She was required to marry him. The girl asked the garden keeper to come to her room. 'O, garden keeper.'

'Yes, my daughter'

'My luck has changed. My father gave me to a husband. You have worked for my garden, yard, and flowers for fifteen years with loyalty and thoroughness. I have been very pleased with your work. But I have been married, and they will take me away. As you have spent your fifteen years on my garden, ask of me what you wish and let me pay you your right. What is your wish? Tell me your wish and let me pay you my debt. Are you still listening to me, old father?"

Hah! Not only that old man but also the other old man, the breaker, the father of the girl, and the king's men were all listening to this discussion, to this story

"When the garden keeper kept silent, the girl again asked, 'Why are you not talking, gardener? Give me an answer'

when she said this, the gardener gave her his answer. She had called him to her room and there was nobody else with them. 'Are you going to pay the value as truly as you say?'

The girl had thought that he would want money. 'Yes, I will pay, as surely as I am a daughter of a king. You have worked for me for fifteen years

The gardener said, 'My girl, I do not want money or riches.'

do you want?

'For you to wear your wedding dress

'And then?'

"You should come to the yard house at midnight, with all your richness, with all your jewelry on you. I will gaze at you for an hour. After staring at you for an hour, I shall have had my wish come true. Then you may go. And let God bless you to your loved one. I do not want money from you. I just want to gaze at your face, but you should come with your wedding dress on. You should not reveal that you are coming to place.

When he said this, the girl again spoke to the gardener: 'O, gardener, you will not have any other bad thoughts? You will just gaze at me. Is this true?'

'Yes, my daughter; if my hand tries to reach you, let my arm be drawn up.

'All right, if it is only to see my beauty, then I ~~am~~ promise that I will come to your yard house tonight. This will be just to make your wish come true.'

Very well.

"O, dervish father, the girl and the gardener decided upon such agreement. Not letting anybody else know, this girl wore her wedding dress

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"Why?"

so I have bested you, even though I have never gone out for theft. 'If she went and never came back, should I stay here? Oh, how nicely she goes, and after she comes back, I shall steal everything.' That thief was a fool."

it is well. You have spoken the right words. You may go back."

To the other old man she said, "Come here. Now the thief is waiting for his quarry. So far, that other father gave the correct answer. From now on, I am going to consult with you. That man gave the correct answer. That is correct: if this thief were wise, he would have robbed the girl. Now the girl, her wedding dress on, goes to the yard house. The gardener knows about it already. One hour in the yard house of the gardener, behind a closed door. With her wedding dress on, she leans against the door. The gardener gazes at her face for one hour.

After an hour she says, 'Has your wish come true, gardener?'

'Yes, it has come true.'

'May I go now?'

'Yes,' he says. 'My wish has come true.'

'The girl goes out from the yard house. If she goes by the road on which she has come, the thief will be waiting for her. But will she be returning along the road by which she has come? No. She has taken another road and she is departing. Now, I am consulting you as if you were the gardener who was in the yard house. See how your old friend gave the correct answer. Suppose you were in the place of that gardener

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gardener, you want to know what I would do. Is that right?"

"Yes."

"Hah! These old men have made the wrong decision. After gazing at her an hour I had my wish come true. Yes. You have said more. When the girl was coming to the yard house, she had met a thief. Yes. And this thief was waiting on the road. The thief was waiting for the girl to come back along the road she had gone on. She had taken little-used road, and on this other road she was going to her palace. Hah Suppose I had been in the place of that gardener when that exceptional beauty came in the middle of the night to my yard house to keep her promise that I might gaze at her for an hour? After all, she was a woman, and I was a man, and this is the reason that I say that the gardener had no conscience. If I had been in the place of that gardener, I should have gone before her with a stick or a knife for protection. I should have taken the girl to her own door by going in front of her. The road on which she came was being watched by a thief. When she took another road, might she not meet another thief, a bastard or an enemy of honor? Who was the reason for this? The gardener was to blame for this.

"Yes, young man, the gardener was to blame," said the girl after pausing for a while.

"Hah! So this is the reason that I say the gardener had no conscience or honor. He said, 'Go, my girl.' He did not take her home by going before her to her house, her door. It is for this reason that I say the gardener had no honor, had no nobility."

When he spoke these words, the girl understood that the young man's inner being was as virtuous as his appearance seemed to indicate. "Look

at him! Hear what he says." To the old men she said, "Both of you come here. If you had been in the place of that thief, you would not have let her go but you would have robbed her. This is your answer. Yes. If you had been in that gardener's place, you would not have allowed her to leave that yard house. Is this not true? See what a virtuous man says: 'That gardener had no conscience or honor or nobility.' These old men must have grown up nourished with bad milk. Your hearts are evil. Bring forth this young man's precious stones. If I call the executioner, both of you will lose your heads. Bring forth the stones! Your prayers from the Koran are made merely for show. Inside you are very evil. I asked you for answers. If you had been in the place of that thief, you said that you would not have permitted her to go but would have stolen everything. If you had been in the place of the gardener, you would not have let her leave. So, are you right or wrong? Look what the virtuous man says: 'If I were in the place of that gardener, I would lead her myself to her door by going before her.' Thus, this virtuous man reveals that his interior is as good as his exterior. Bring forth the stones of this man."

When she said this, the old men gave back the stones to their owner. The girl then turned to her father and said, "O, father, the king. This is the judgement through wisdom. This is the court of re power. See how I have judged them by themselves. I asked them about themselves. They themselves demonstrated how evil they are."

As it is known, in any case, the inside of man can often be brought outside. The respect for knowledge is beautiful, for it comes from the

spirit. If a man has fear of God, you can hear the sighing of his heart. When it is spring, the plants begin to grow. The water runs and arrives finally in the sea. Buildings rot upward from their foundations. The heart says, "Ah, Vah!" and the lovers hear it. What kind of lovers? It is the lovers whose chests are burning, the lovers who have turned to God. It is true poetry that can be drawn from these words of mine. My tongue will be a pencil, and with it I can write my problems as if I were writing a book. Because of the sorrow of love, tears come from the eyes. Thus it is that "Ah, Vah!" say the lovers whose hearts are crying, whose hearts are suffering. So it is with this kind of lover. Your words, your mind, your situation in life are all intermingled. This is the end of this story. Let me open my book and see what my mirror shows. Now I shall begin to tell my third story.