

Story 989 (1964 Tape 4)

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Location: Germencik, kaza town of Aydın Province
(But tale was taped at Sinop Penitentiary)

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The Fortunes of Arif the Dissolute

There was once a rich ağa¹¹³⁻¹¹⁴ who lived on a large estate. He had a son whom he named Arif. The boy was a very intelligent child, but as he grew older, he led a very loose life, living much of the time with gamblers, drunkards, and prostitutes. He spent large sums of his father's wealth in gambling.

Men who knew the family went to his father and said to¹¹³⁻¹¹⁴ him, "Hey, Ağa, your son, Arif, is overly fond of women, and he is also too fond of gambling. He has been losing a great amount of money recently in gambling."¹¹⁶⁻¹⁷

The ağa was saddened by this information. He was a wealthy and respected person. Furthermore, he was a charitable and generous man who found jobs for the poor. He was at a loss to understand why his son behaved so badly.

One day the ağa called the young man to his presence and said, "Arif, my son, I know that you are still a young man and

¹An ağa is a rural landowner, often rich and usually powerful.

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it is natural that you should chase women some and occasionally gamble. But why do you gamble so much? Gambling is one of the worst things one can do in this life. Your gambling could ruin our whole family."

The more the ağa thought about this, the more disturbed he grew. Finally he said to the two executioners in his employment, "Go and cut off Arif's head and bring it to me!"

But the muhtar² of the village, who also happened to be imam^{114/115} was present when the ağa gave this order, and he arose and spoke. "Do not do such a thing, Ağa! I have a proposal for a better thing to do."

"What is your proposal, Imam Efendi?"⁴ asked the ağa.

The imam answered, "O Ağa, it is easy to break a pitcher very difficult to make it whole again. Don't have Arif executed. Don't have his head cut off, but, instead, have him exiled. After he has departed, he will live a miserable exis-

^{114/118}
²The head man, elected, in a village is called a muhtar.

³The imam is a clergyman, usually responsible for leading prayer services in a mosque.

⁴Efendi is a term of respect--like Sir in English--for a man. It was formerly used to show deference and respect for a distinguished person. In recent times, however, its value has been so deflated that it is now applied only to children and servants.

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tence and perhaps even starve to death. That is enough! if he should survive, he will always regret his past behavior and think of the time when he was the heir of a wealthy man. He may even grow penitent when he considers all of this and decide to do his duty toward you as a son should. Consider this possibility and take my advice in this matter."

Finding the imam's proposal quite reasonable, the ağa said, "Arif, prepare at once to leave this land. I do not want to hear your name mentioned again in my territories I ever do hear it uttered again, I shall have you executed at once.

Arif went to his father's treasury where he stole ^{money} a great amount of money. Then, mounting his horse, he set forth on his journey. After riding for some distance, he reached a city. There he went to an inn, ^{5 115-117} tied his horse in the stable, and reserved a room for himself. He did not like staying at luxurious hotels frequented by gentlemen. He always found tramps, ne'er-do-wells, and gamblers to befriend, and that is what he did here at the inn. He at once resumed his old habits, gambling even more recklessly than he had before. It was not long before he had lost all of his money, and then

⁵Inn (han) usually referred to a caravansery, a place to accommodate travelers. Providing a safe compound for travelers' animals and baggage, the inn had adequate but hardly luxurious quarters for human beings.

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he had to sell his horse in order to pay his gambling debts. After paying these debts, he had only a small amount of money left.

One day he took a walk around the city just to relieve his boredom. After a while he arrived at a saddle shop where the saddler had just finished a very fine saddle. This saddle was equipped with four knobs. When two of the knobs were turned, the saddle would rise and fly about in the air. When other two knobs were turned, it would descend to earth again. Greatly attracted by this flying saddle, Arif asked, "Saddler, much are you asking for this saddle?"

"1,000 liras."

"I'll give you 1,500 for it." Even when he was almost impoverished, Arif was as reckless with money as he had been when he was rich. After buying the saddle, Arif discovered

it was made of such fine leather that it could be folded down small enough to fit into a handkerchief and tucked into his pocket.⁶ With this marvelous saddle in his pocket, Arif returned to the inn, where he hoped to recover the money spent on the saddle by means of gambling.

When he reached the inn, it was midnight, and his friends

⁶ Either the narrator knows nothing about saddles or he is pushing his poetic license to its utmost bounds. Saddles are not merely leather but are built upon a wooden frame.

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were all gambling. He immediately joined them, but instead of winning, he lost continually. Soon a fight broke out, and in that fight Arif killed one of the other gamblers. Deciding to flee, he got upon his magic saddle, turned the first two knobs, rose into the air. He did not know where it was going as it flew away. It was very late by now, and Arif grew very sleepy. Deciding to land and sleep for a while, he pushed the lowering knobs. Folding up the saddle and putting it in pocket again, Arif said, "Bismillah!"⁷ and lay down on the ground to sleep.

Arif had landed in a village of 300 houses, but it was dark for him to see where he had landed. When he awoke in the early morning, he found that he was in a village, but nowhere could he see any human being, any animal, or smoke rising from any chimney. He was hungry and wanted to find someone who would give him some breakfast. As he walked around, he noticed some 200 to 300 meters from the edge of the village a house from which smoke was rising. Walking to that house, he called out, "Is there anyone here?"

An old woman came to the door and asked, "What do you want, my son?"

⁷Bismillah is a shortened form of Bismillahirrahmanirrahim--
In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. Turks usually use the shorter form. It is usually uttered at the beginning of any undertaking, large or small, and thus it could be translated, "I begin with the name of God."

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"Mother, will you accept me as a guest?"

"Of course! Come in."

Arif entered the house and sat down while the old woman cooked a batch of tarhana soup.⁸ Arif was very hungry, and he was especially fond of that kind of soup. When the soup was ready, the old woman placed it before Arif and then sat watching him eat it. She thought about how many hardships he had probably encountered during his life. She asked him, "What is your name, son?"

"Arif is my name, Mother."

"Arif, haven't you anyone in this world?"⁹

"No, I have no one--neither mother nor father--in this world. I am traveling looking for a suitable job.

The old woman's husband had been the owner of a great tract of land, upon which her present house was located. At the time of his death she had inherited all of that land, she could do little with it. She simply lived alone in a cottage on one edge of the land. She now asked, "Would you be willing to become my adopted son, Arif? I have no one to keep me company here, and all of the land that you can see here

⁸Tarhana soup (tarhana çorbası) is one of the popular soups of Turks. Tarhana is a foodstuff made up of dried yogurt curds, flour, and crushed wheat.

⁹A common expression indicating that a person has no family or relatives.

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belongs to me. There is no one now to tend to all of this land.

"I have been looking for just such a place, Mother. Of course I shall be glad to become your adopted son and call Mother.

When the old woman heard him say this, she tore open the front of her dress. Then she had Arif walk between her legs three times.¹⁰

Arif stayed with this old woman for some time, but because he was accustomed to town living, he soon became bored in the quiet atmosphere of this village. There were no inns, baths, or entertainment of any kind there. One day he said to his foster mother, "I have become very bored here. Haven't you anywhere in your territory a city? I should like to go to a city where I can be shaved and where I can buy a few things.

"Yes, I have city six hours from here,¹¹ and tomorrow is market day there. Go there tomorrow, and while you are there buy me some sugar, some salt, some soap, some thread,

¹⁰ A symbolic gesture suggesting a surrogate birth. See Orhan Acıpayamlı's book on Turkish childbirth lore, Türkiye'de Doğumla İlgili Adet ve İnanmaların.

¹¹ Before automobile and bus transportation became readily available in the 1950s, distances were measured by peasants not in terms of kilometers but in terms of hours of walking time.

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some other things that you think appropriate. What should an old woman like me need, anyway?"

"All right. I shall go there tomorrow

On the morning of the following day Arif took some money from his foster mother, mounted a horse, and started out for city. His route lay along the seacoast, and as he rode along, he kept gazing at the sea. After a while he noticed a tall ^{120, 123, 124} apartment house built out in the sea. At first he did not know what this was. He could see a huge building with gardens all around it sunk in the water. There was no one along the way whom he could ask about this apartment. He thought that in the city he was approaching there would be someone who could explain this building.

As he came closer to the city, he saw a farmer plowing field. Arif called to this man, "Selāmünaleyküm,"¹² Uncle it go easily,¹³ Uncle, what is that building in the sea over there?"

"Oh, today is market day in our city, son."

"No, no, I didn't ask you about market day. I asked you

¹²Peace be unto you! This and the usual response, Aley-kümselām--not given here by the farmer--are the greetings exchanged between Moslems, especially if they are strangers to each other: Peace be unto you/And may peace be unto you too.

¹³Kolay gelsin! (May it go easily!) is a hearty encouragement given to a person engaged in any kind of work, especially physical labor.

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about that building over there. What is it?"

"Oh, there are restaurants in our city too!" said the farmer.

"No, no, I am not interested in restaurants. I am asking about something else! What is that building with towers over there in the sea?"

"Yes, we have shoemakers, bootmakers, and all kinds of craftsmen in our city."

Arif was by now furious at the farmer. He wondered, "Is the man a lunatic? If not, what could be his reason for not telling me the truth about the building?" Leaving the farmer, he rode along a little farther and came upon a woman standing alongside the road. He said to her, "Auntie, I want to you about something."

"Go ahead and ask. What is it?"

"What is that apartment house over there in the sea?"

The woman answered, "Oh, yes, son, there are many butchers in our city

I am not inquiring about butchers! What is that building over there?

"There are also many places in our city where you can buy coffee and sugar."

"No, no, no! I do not care about such things. I am talking about something else! I am asking you what that apart-

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ment house is over there in the sea!"

"You can buy anything that you want today, for this is market day," she said.

concluded that this woman was also a lunatic. However, when he arrived in the city and asked many people the same question, he couldn't get any satisfactory answer from any of them either. He was so angry and upset by all this that he hardly knew what he was buying in the marketplace. He bought coffee when he meant to buy sugar; he bought sugar when he wanted to buy soap; and he grew totally confused. By the time he got home he felt decidedly ill

"What is the matter with you, Arif?" his foster mother asked. "Why are you so lost in thought?"

"Never mind Just make my bed, for I want to sleep. I am very nervous

won't you eat something first?"

"No, I am not hungry.

"Then let me make you a cup of coffee."

"I shall take only a cup of coffee. Will you make up my bed? I want to lie down at once. You are also a native of this country, and if I ask you the same question I have been asking your fellow countrymen, you probably wouldn't give me a sane answer either!"

"Well, why don't you try me? After all, you are my son!"

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"All right, then, I shall tell you what it was that made me so upset. In fact, I must tell you about it or I shall die!"

"Then let me hear it," said the old woman.

"Well, along my route to the city I saw an apartment house standing in the sea. None of the people I asked about this building would give me a satisfactory answer to my question. It was this that angered and upset me so much.

"I shall explain to you the facts about that building," said his foster mother. "The padişah of this land has a very beautiful daughter whom he secludes in that palace¹⁴ in order to keep her away from people.

that mystery. Now you can bring out the food. Now I can eat the food as well as drink the coffee."

Arif now ate the food and drank the coffee. He was happy. He wished that he could ride to that castle in the sea that night under the cover of darkness. When evening came, he said

¹⁴This is the first time that the word palace has been used; all previous references to the building cited it as an apartment house. To most rural peasants, the most glamorous of buildings is an apartment house. Unbelievably tall and filled with comforts and wonders of technology, it is suitable for the most important of people. Hence the kings and queens of ancient tales are, quite anachronistically, moved out of palaces and resettled in apartments.

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"Mother, I do not want to sleep inside tonight. Make up my bed on the roof.¹⁵ It is too warm inside."

The old woman objected, saying, "But Arif, if you get up at night, you may fall off the roof and break a leg!"

"I am not a child, Mother. I can take care of myself!"

The old woman made up the bed on the roof, and when darkness came, Arif went up there to sleep. Shortly after he had retired, however, he arose again. Taking out his magic saddle, he sat upon it, turned the first two knobs and flew to the apartment house in the sea. After he had landed in the garden of that building, he folded up his saddle and put it back in his pocket. Opening the door of the building, he walked inside. There he found a kettle of water boiling on the fire. On a table were cheese, bread, butter, and honey, all ready to be eaten. There was someone sleeping in the bed, but it was impossible for him to see who it was.

Arif sat at the table drinking tea and eating bread and cheese. When he had finished eating, he smoked a cigarette. All the while he was doing this, he was very curious about the sleeper. Going now to the bed, he lifted one corner of

¹⁵In southern Turkey rural residents often sleep on the flat roofs of their houses during the summer. In Adana Province, where summer temperatures and humidity are very high, as many as 90% of the rural people sleep on their roofs, according to a government official in that province.

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the blanket and saw beneath it a beautiful girl. She was as beautiful as the fourteenth of the moon.¹⁶ Arif fell in love with this girl immediately. Bending over her, he kissed the girl lightly on the cheek. He then took out his saddle, mounted it, and flew away.¹⁷

The girl had continued sleeping throughout his visit to her apartment. When she finally awoke, she was amazed to discover that the tea had all been drunk and the bread, cheese and other food had been eaten. She noticed also that her cheek itched. She wondered who it was who had come there, for this was the first visitor she had had in all of the years she had lived there. She decided to watch the next night to see who it was who visited her palace, but she did not know if she would be able to stay awake all night. She therefore cut her finger and put salt in the wound ~~to~~ keep her awake. She then went to bed, pulling the blanket over her head, but she did not fall asleep. She waited for the arrival of her strange

¹⁶ Among all natural phenomena, the moon is to many Turks the most beautiful. It is considered to be at its most beautiful when full, and on the old lunar calendar it was fullest on the fourteenth of the month. To compare the beauty of a woman to that of the moon is high praise for her; to compare her to the fourteenth of the moon is the ultimate praise. In earlier times female beauty required a degree of plumpness, and so the rotund beauty of the woman parallels the rotund beauty of the moon.

¹⁷ See Notes volume for the traditions of "Maiden Castles" in sea off shores of Asia Minor.

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visitor. When she heard a buzzing sound after a while, she thought, "Whoever it is, he is coming now." What she heard was the sound made by Arif's flying saddle

As he had done before, Arif landed in the garden. Going then to the palace, he opened the door and walked inside the building. Arif was such a handsome man that he was almost as beautiful as a girl. Young men as handsome as he are not often seen. Just as soon as the girl took one look at Arif, she fell in love with him at once, but she remained quiet in order to see what he would do.


Arif did just as he had done on his first visit. He sat down at the table, ate the bread and cheese, and drank the tea. Then he smoked a cigarette. Just as he had done before, he then went to the bed and lifted one corner of the blanket off the girl in order to kiss her. Just as he was about to kiss her, however, she sprang up and caught him by the arm. "O young man!" she said, "No one is permitted to come here! My father is a padişah. How dare you come here?" But as they gazed at each other, they both realized how much in love they were with one another. Since there was no one there to conduct a wedding service, they just considered themselves married. After that, Arif came every night to stay with the princess, traveling back and forth between the palace in the sea and his own home on his flying saddle. This continued for some time.

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The girl's father, the padişah, used to visit his daughter in her palace in the sea once every year. When he came, he would examine her and weigh her. Her normal weight for several years had been seventy kilograms, but beginning on the day when she first met Arif, her weight started to increase. By the time that the padişah came for his annual visit, she weighed 120 kilograms.

"Explain this to me!" said her father. "Remember that I am a padişah, and I can have you executed if you fail to tell me the truth about this."

The girl had no choice but to tell the truth. "Father, a young man comes here every night and ruins my life. I do not know who he is. In fact, I do not even know what his name is. There has been no one here to whom I could complain about this and you come here only once a year. Now you know the situation.

The padişah said, "How am I going to find this fellow? I have no knowledge of who he is or where he lives. Let me tell you what we shall do, and remember that if you fail to do as I tell you, I shall have you executed. When that young man comes again, you will talk with him and behave as usual. But when he is in bed with you, dip your hand in tar and then press it against his back. I shall then have all the young men in the country gathered together and examined. In this way we shall, of course, be able to identify him.

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right, Father. I shall do as you have ordered.

evening Arif came as usual to be with his beloved

After they had been together for a while, they drank some sherbet.¹⁸ After they had done this, the girl dipped her hand in tar and pressed it against Arif's back without his knowing what she was doing. As dawn approached, Arif mounted his magic saddle and flew back to the home of his foster mother. Being quite tired now, he took off his jacket, threw it on the floor, and went to bed

Later that same morning the padişah's criers began making a public announcement throughout the land: "Every male eighteen years old or older is required to gather in the square before the padişah's palace." When a great crowd had gathered in the square, each was examined carefully, but no one of them was found to have tar on his back

The padişah's men were then ordered to search everywhere to see if there was anyone who had failed to report to the square before the palace. They discovered that there was an old woman with an adopted son named Arif who had not attended the meeting. When they went to the old woman's house and found Arif there, they grabbed him and examined his back. Finding the mark of tar on his back, they took him at once into

¹⁸In the Middle East sherbet is not a frozen dessert but a cold fruit drink.

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the presence of the padişah

"Were you the fellow who visited my daughter's palace?"
asked the padişah

"Yes, Your Majesty, it was I."

"How did you get out to her palace in the sea?"

"I am a good swimmer. I can swim for an hour, two hours, three hours--even five hours." He said this because he was afraid that if he mentioned the saddle, they would take it away from him.

"Can you prove that you can swim there?"

"Of course I can

But the padişah hesitated to allow him to try this, for he feared that Arif might escape from his hands. Bringing his daughter from the sea palace to the mainland, the padişah asked her if Arif was the man who had been visiting her. After the girl had confessed that it was Arif who had often visited her, she was again sent back to her sea palace. The padişah then ordered that Arif be executed: "Cut off his head and bring it to me!"

As the executioners were taking Arif to be beheaded, the young man said to them, "Friends, is it not customary to grant a condemned person his last wish? My only wish is to be left alone for a few minutes so that I can take my ablutions and pray to God for the last time."

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The executioners agreed to grant Arif's last wish, they tied a rope to his foot so that he could not escape. They then gave him an ibrik¹⁹ of water. Taking the ibrik, Arif went behind a pine tree and began to wash. His purpose, however, was not to pray but to escape. Untying the rope from his foot, he then retied it to the tree. Taking the magic saddle from his pocket, he opened it up and sat on it. Then he slowly turned the first two knobs. The executioners thought that he was praying, but they soon saw him rising into the air. There were no rifles or other guns in those days, and so the executioners had to stand by helplessly as Arif escaped.

Arif flew at once to the palace in the sea and picked up the princess. Then the two of them flew together for several days in order to get as far as possible from her father's territory. As they were flying swiftly through the air, the girl began to have labor pains. As they were traveling night, the girl said, "I am very cold. Let us land and make a fire with which we can warm ourselves."

Because he was very fond of his wife, Arif said, "All right! I shall somehow get a fire for us, but I have no matches with which to build a fire." He saw a glowing at some

¹⁹ An ibrik is a pitcher with a long, curved spout, like that of an old-fashioned coffee pot.

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distance from them in the night, but he could not tell exactly where it was located. Descending to earth, they found themselves in a thick, dark forest. Not far from where they had landed, Arif found a caravan trail. Placing the saddle on this trail, Arif then seated his wife upon the saddle and departed in search of the fire that made the glow they had seen from above. In his search, however, Arif became lost among the roots and trees, and he was unable to find his way back his wife.

In those days there were no automobiles, but there were camel caravans that were used as a means of transportation. A caravan came along the trail upon which the girl was sitting. The donkey leading the caravan²⁰ was loaded with cups and plates and pots and pans. When the donkey came upon the seated girl, it became frightened. Banging against the trees and falling to the ground several times, it smashed most of the fragile materials in the packs upon its back. The camel driver who came forward could not understand what had so frightened the donkey that it had broken a thousand liras' worth of pottery, but he finally saw the beautiful girl now lying along the trail.

By the time the camel driver found her, the girl had given birth to twin boys. The one she called Hasan and the

²⁰^{twin s} For some reason unknown to us, camel caravans were often led by a donkey, a mule, or a horse.

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other she named Hüseyin.²¹ Shé was giving suck to both of them at the same time. the camel

driver said,

I shall not leave

this woman here."

part of the forest, he put the girl in a chest, loaded her onto a camel, and set out again.

In the meantime Arif was wandering about in search of his wife. He traveled among rocks and over mountains, but he was unable to find her. He finally arrived in the land to which the (caravan) was headed. His clothes were torn in many places, and he looked very shabby.

Now it happened that the padişah of that land had died recently. The people had been seeking a new padişah, but they had been unable to agree upon a choice of any of the men who had been suggested for that position.

²³Such bird selection occurs in folktales of different lands, but nowhere is it more common than in Turkish tales. The bird is known as Talih Kuşu (Bird of Fortune) and Devlet Kuşu (Government Bird). See Subject Index of Archive of Turkish Oral Narrative for other instances of ruler selection by means of such a bird.

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the bird was released, it circled and circled above the crowd without landing on anyone's head. As Arif approached this crowd, he wondered what all these people were doing, and he decided to join them in order to see what was happening. After the bird had circled the crowd once more, it landed upon Arif's head.

The people nearest Arif shouted at him, "You scoundrel!"

"Get out of here!" and "What are you doing here?" and "It was going to land on my head, but by mistake it landed on yours!"

Arif went away from the crowd for a short distance, but then when the second bird flight was to begin, he moved in among the people again. They released the bird for a second time, and after it had circled the crowd several times, it landed on Arif's head again. But the people dismissed this choice of the bird. One of the crowd said, "Where did this filthy tramp come from? The bird was about to land on my head but mistakenly landed on his. Get the hell out of here!"

Arif walked away from the crowd, but he circled around and then rejoined it on the opposite side. It was customary in such bird selections to permit the bird to choose three times. When the bird was released for the third time, it circled about until it found Arif in his new position in the crowd.

The wise men of the community now began to make their

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observations on the situation. One of them said, "If this fellow had not come from a noble family, the bird would not have selected him."

Another of the wise men said, "If this young man were properly dressed, he would look worthy of sitting upon a throne."

What this second man said was proven to be true. When he was bathed and properly dressed he looked very handsome. And because he was city-bred, he had graceful and gracious manners. And thus it was that Arif became the ruler of that land.

Now let us see what has happened to Hasan and Hüseyin. They had been cared for by wild animals in the forest. They had been separated for some time, but when they were ten years old they had somehow found each other again. They traveled together out of the forest toward human settlements. Hasan said, "If we go to the same village or town, there may be jealousy developing between us. Let us stop here to pray. Then you take one road and I shall take another. If we live long enough, we shall meet again."

Hüseyin agreed to this, and so the two took ablutions and said their prayers. They then kissed each other and smelled each other.²⁴ Then they parted at a crossroad, one taking one direction and the other the opposite direction.

²⁴Both in folktales and in real life there are Turks who claim to be able to identify family members by their scent.

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After wandering for a long time, Hüseyin reached the land where his father had become padişah. He did not, of course, know that the padişah was his father. In that town there was on a side street a barbershop that was doing almost no business. Hüseyin sat down to rest against the wall across the street from that barbershop. Hüseyin was very hungry, but he did

know anyone from whom he might request some food. The ~~barber~~ (barber) was an old and experienced man. As soon as he looked at Hüseyin, he realized that he was a well-mannered and clean sort of boy, and so he called him over to his shop. "Hey, son! Come over here! Where have you come from?"

"I am a stranger here

"Have you no parents?"

"No, I have no one in this world."

"What are you doing here, then?"

"I am looking for a job. I am ready to work as a shepherd or as an apprentice at some trade."

"Well, my barbershop does little business, for I have very few regular customers left. I am tired of sitting here and doing almost nothing. Why not become my ¹³⁵⁻¹³ ~~apprentice~~ and ¹³ learn to be a barber? Then if a customer comes, you can cut his hair and shave him, and if no one comes, then you can just here in my shop. How about that?"

"I should like to do that," said Hüseyin.

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"What pay would you expect to receive for a year's work?" asked the barber.

"All I want is my daily food," said Hüseyin.

This remark impressed the barber even more favorably with the young man. He took Hüseyin to a public bath^{136, 138} so that he could wash himself thoroughly, and then the barber bought new clothes.

When he began working as an apprentice, Hüseyin cleaned polished everything in the barbershop. He sharpened all of the scissors and razors. People passing by the shop noticed difference in the appearance of the place. They also noticed what an attractive young man the apprentice was. Every-

in the neighborhood began talking about him: "Such-and-such a barber has a very handsome apprentice." More and more customers began to come to that barbershop, many of them previously the regular customers of other shops. The old barber earned so much money from the increased business that he hardly knew what to do with it all. He refurnished the barbershop, buying new chairs and new mirrors for the walls.

Even Arif, the former gambler who was now the padişah of that land, heard about the new apprentice. He also decided to have a haircut at that barbershop. While Hüseyin was cutting his hair and shaving him, the boy talked very pleasantly,

Arif took an immediate liking to him. The padişah felt

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that he would make a most suitable servant at the palace
someone who could make his tea in the morning and prepare
his ^{pipe - smoking} narghile²⁵ in the evening. He said to the barber, "Bar-
ber, I am going to take this boy away from you."

"But, Your Majesty, that means depriving me of my daily
bread!"

"Well, I am determined to take him, but here is a
sum of money to make up for your loss." The padişah paid the
barber and took Hüseyin with him. "What is your name?" he
asked the boy.

"Hüseyin."

"Hüseyin, your duties will be fixing my tea, preparing
my narghile, and talking with me. I am often bored with life,
and I want such conversation for entertainment. Those
the only things I shall ask you to do

The boy said, "Very well, Your Majesty. I shall do my
best to please you."

Now let us go and see what Hasan is doing. After he had
wandered around for some time, Hasan arrived in this same town.
It so happened that he also sat down to rest against the same
wall opposite the barbershop that his brother had leaned against.
When the barber looked out and saw him, he called out, "Hey
boy, where do you come from?"

²⁵A narghile (Turkish nargile) is a water-pipe used for
smoking.

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"I am a stranger here," said Hasan.

"What is your name?"

"My name is Hasan."

"Have you no parents?"

"No, I have none."

"Would you be willing to work as an apprentice here in my shop?"

"Yes, I should be glad to do that."

"What pay would you expect to receive?"

"I want no pay except my daily food," said Hasan.

The barber took him to the public bath. After he was thoroughly washed, he was given new clothes. The barber was very pleased to have this substitute for Hüseyin. This boy was, in fact, an even better talker than Hüseyin, and he seemed to work even harder than Hüseyin. What is more, the customers were equally well pleased with him. He became quite well known, and soon word of his arrival reached Hüseyin. When Hüseyin heard that this new apprentice was named Hasan, he thought that he might possibly be his own brother, and so he decided to go to that shop for a haircut. He said to the padişah, "Your Majesty, may I go to my old place of employment in order to get a haircut?"

"You have permission to go on the condition that you do not return home late."

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When Hüseyin arrived at the barbershop, he gazed for some time at the young apprentice called Hasan, for quite a while had now elapsed since last he had seen him. Although he could not recognize him for certain, he felt some sympathy toward Hasan, for the two of them had the same blood in their veins. He decided to tell the padişah about Hasan and request that he hire the boy as an extra servant. When he was alone with the padişah--making his tea or preparing his narghile or holding conversation with him in the evening--he could talk freely with the ruler.

After he had returned to the palace, at the first appropriate time, Hüseyin said to the padişah, "Your Majesty, there is a young apprentice named Hasan at the barbershop where you found me. He is a very clean and courteous young man. For love of God, please hire this young man as an extra servant so that while one of us is making your tea the other can prepare your narghile

The padişah agreed to this proposal, and so Hüseyin went to the barbershop to get Hasan and take him back to the palace. There was no way in which the barber could prevent this, for it was the padişah's will. From then on, the two boys worked together in the palace. Each morning one of them made tea for the padişah while the other filled his narghile. When their day's work was finished, they retired to their quarters and

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spent the rest of their time talking together pleasantly

Now let us see what the leader of the caravan has been doing. He had traveled a great distance, sold all of his goods, made a great profit, and while doing all this, he had always kept his lady with him. His home was in that same land where the two boys and Arif now lived. When he discovered that a new padişah had been selected during the time that he had been traveling, the caravan leader decided that it would be a wise move to take the new ruler some presents and become acquainted with him. He felt that as a leading member of society he had an obligation to do this.²⁶ Going to the palace he said, "Selâmünaleyküm, Your Majesty."

"Aleykümselâm, camel driver. Welcome!"

"I feel welcome."²⁷ Hearing that you had been chosen padişah during my travels in foreign lands, I decided to come to congratulate you and to give you some souvenirs from my

²⁶This passage reflects the peasant concept of easy accessibility to the Prime Minister and President. At the time this tale was being collected there were many villagers who went to Ankara fully expecting to visit İsmet İnönü, then premier, and Cemâl Gürsel, then President.

²⁷Hoş geldiniz! (Come with welcome!) and Hoş bulduk (I or We feel or find myself or ourselves welcome!) This is the traditional opening remark of the host when a caller comes to his home or office or space plus the guests' traditional response. In the often ritualized conversation of Turks, there is no acceptable substitute for either of these expressions in this social situation.

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travels. As you know, I am one of the gentry of this area, and I thought that this occasion might give us the opportunity of becoming better acquainted."

"I am glad that you have come, and I hope that you will stay here as my guest tonight," answered the padişah. "My life is passing in boredom here in this palace. You are a much-traveled man, and I am sure that I would enjoy hearing about some of your experiences."

"Your Majesty, I would gladly remain here for the night but I have at home a wife whom I do not like to leave alone for I have more enemies than friends in this world. I hope that you will pardon me when I tell you that I cannot accept your offer.

"Don't worry about your family. I have here two servants whom I can send to guard your wife. They can take good care of your wife while you are here entertaining me."

"In that case I shall be pleased to accept your invitation, Your Majesty," said the camel driver.

The padişah called his two personal servants: "Oh, Hasan! Oh, Hüseyin!"

"Yes, Your Majesty," they both answered.

"You will go to such-and-such a house on a certain street. Take the horse carriage and go to that house, which is owned by this camel driver. Guard that house and this man's wife

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throughout the night, and he will return to his home in the morning and take over the house from you.

Hasan and Hüseyin rode in the royal carriage to the house of the camel driver. There they sat on the front porch in order to guard the house. After a while Hasan said, "It is very boring just sitting here like this. To pass the time more interestingly, let each of us tell his life-story. My own story is very sad, and whenever I tell it, I begin to cry."

story is also very sad, but let us tell our stories anyway," said Hüseyin

While the two boys were telling their stories, the wife of the camel driver watched and listened to them from behind a curtain. She thought to herself, "I wonder if my two sons were still alive if they would look like these two young men. That filthy camel driver caught us, threw my two children into the wilderness, and then brought me here." She then prayed to God for relief from her troubles.

Hüseyin said to Hasan, "My father's name was Arif."

"What?"

father's name was Arif."

"How could that be? But go on."²⁸

²⁸ A fairly competent raconteur in his other tales, the narrator mishandles badly the plot of this story. In this common and well-known plot--see Notes volume for tale type numbers--the family is separated only after the two sons are several years old. They can thus remember what happened to them, and they

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"My mother was the daughter of a padişah, and my father carried her away. As they were flying through the sky in their escape, my mother began to have labor pains, but she could not say that. She could only say, 'I am very cold. Let us land and make a fire with which to warm ourselves.' My father was very fond of my mother, and so they descended to the earth, but he had nothing with which to make a fire. Leaving my mother in a quiet place in the forest, he set out in search of a place from which he could get fire. While he was gone, she gave birth to two boys named Hasan and Hüseyin. I don't know what happened to Hasan, whether he is dead or alive. Just after the birth of the two sons, a caravan came along, and the lead donkey became frightened by the sight of the woman and the newborn babies. It ran about wildly and broke most of the pottery it was carrying. This called the attention of the camel driver to my mother. He threw me and my brother into a wild part of the forest and took my mother with him. My brother and I grew up in the woods sucking our fingers.²⁹ Years later my brother

can remember their parents. In this variant, however, the family is separated just minutes after the twin sons are born. There is no way in which they could know anything about (1) how they survived in the woods, (2) human language, (3) their parents, or (4) their parents' lives before they (the sons) were born. Tahir Bey is here telling the tale as if the boys knew well all these things--as they do in the traditional versions.

²⁹This is a common figurative way of saying that they were not nursed or that they had nothing to eat.

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and I found each other. We spent some time together. But fearing that some misunderstanding or jealousy might develop between us, my brother suggested to me that we separate, he taking one road and I another. I have never seen him again since that day. I became an apprentice in a barbershop, where the padişah saw me one day and decided to make me his personal servant. And that is how I got here."

When Hasan had heard all of this account, he jumped up, embraced his brother, and said, "Oh, my brother Hüseyin, I am your brother Hasan! I am grateful to God for this day!"

The woman inside the building, who had also heard all of Hüseyin's account, realized that Hüseyin and Hasan were her two sons. Breaking out the window through which she had been listening, she climbed out upon the porch, threw herself upon her sons, and said, "And I am your mother!" Pressing them to her bosom, she kept saying, "You are alive! You are alive!" Inasmuch as she had not nursed them when they were infants, she now gave one of her breasts to each son, and the two boys fell asleep while being suckled in this way

In the morning the camel driver left the palace and walked to his own residence. When he saw the two young men sleeping with the breasts of his wife in their mouths, he almost went mad. Immediately rushing back to the palace, he said, "Your Majesty, is this what you intended to do to me?"

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"What is the matter?" asked the padişah

"I beg your pardon, but the two young men whom you sent to care for my wife have raped her! Go there and see yourself! The two young men are asleep holding her breasts in their mouths with their hands.

When the padişah heard this, he was ^{angry} furious. He said to his attendants, "Call the executioners and have these two men brought here!" The executioners brought the two young men and the camel driver's wife into the presence of the padişah. The camel driver was there too, of course. The padişah then exclaimed, "Oh, Hüseyin! Oh, Hasan! What have you done?"

The two boys were so stunned that they could not utter a single word, but the woman jumped forward and said, "Just a minute! Wait! They have done no wrong! They are my two sons!"

When the padişah looked closely at the woman, he recognized her. He knew that she was the woman who had once been his wife. "How and when did you have these children?" he asked.

"My husband once left me in the forest in order to search for some fire with which to warm me. I waited for him for a long while, but he never returned to me. God granted me two sons, one of whom I called Hasan and the other Hüseyin. When I started to nurse these children, this cruel, savage camel driver came along, took the children away from me, and cast them into a dark place in the forest. Then he brought me to

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this country after the completion of a long journey. Thanks to you, I have discovered my two sons!"

"Is your husband's saddle still in your possession?" asked the padişah.

"Yes, it is."

"Didn't the camel driver see it?"

"No. I did not show it to him. Here it is." When the camel driver saw it, he was amazed.

The padişah said to her, "Now that you are married to this camel driver, you should forget about your first husband."

"Your Majesty, save me from the hands of this camel driver! My children and I will go from land to land and try to locate my first husband. If I should die, I shall die in search of him. I did not marry this camel driver willingly. He took me by force."

The padişah then asked, "Would you recognize your husband if you saw him?"

"Why shouldn't I?"

"Look closely," said the padişah, "and tell me whether you can see him anywhere in the crowd of people here."

"No, he is not here," said the woman

In those days the rulers used to wear very large turbans. When the padişah removed his turban, he said, "Now take another look."

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When the woman looked this time, she saw that her first husband had become a padişah. She then threw her arms around his neck and fainted.

The padişah then said to the executioners, "Take this camel driver and skin him alive. Fill his skin with straw and hang it in front of my palace."

And thus this tale has ended.

Efe