

Story #72 (In letter to Ahmet Uysal via school teacher in this village.)

Narrator: Hidayet Akcan, 12  
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The Keloğlan Who Would Not Tell

three brothers

Once there was a stupid Keloğlan who lived with two older brothers. <sup>brother -- three</sup>  
 They made their living by <sup>not -- as name of livelihood</sup> hauling wood from the forest on their donkey and selling it in the village. One day Keloğlan said to his brothers, "Let me take the donkey and bring back the wood today."

"No," said the oldest brother, "you would probably leave the donkey in the forest, and then we would have nothing."

"No, I wouldn't," insisted Keloğlan, and after some discussion, they decided to let him take the donkey to haul the wood that day.

As Keloğlan entered the forest, he discovered a bag of gold <sup>gold -- bag of</sup> under a tree. He started to pick it up when some crows in the tree began to shout, "Ga! Ga! Ga!" Keloğlan thought they were saying, "We'll give you the bag of gold for your donkey."

"All right," he said, "I shall sell him to you, although my brothers may be angry with me." After the crows had led the donkey away, Keloğlan dug a hole and buried the gold. Then he went home and told his brothers what he had done.

His brothers beat Keloğlan for losing their donkey, as they had feared he would. But Keloğlan insisted that he had received a bag of gold in exchange, and finally the brothers decided to go and see if there were really a bag of gold buried in the forest.

As they were digging up the gold that night, the village bekçi came along and asked them what they were doing. The brothers were afraid to be caught with so much gold, and so they knocked down the bekçi and left him there, thinking they had killed him.

goat flock of

On the way home with the gold, the brothers passed a flock of goats. Being hungry from their work, they decided to steal a large goat, a keçi (goat). They stole a keçi and cut off a hind leg to roast. Then, before anyone could discover what they had done, they threw the rest of the carcass down a well and went on home.

When they got home, they started to roast the leg of the keçi and to count their money.

we want to use it to weigh gold."

Keloğlan went to the home of their neighbor and asked to borrow the scales. "What do you want to weigh with them?" asked the neighbor.

"We do not want to weigh gold," answered Keloğlan. When the neighbor heard this, he became suspicious and put some thick pekmez<sup>2</sup> on the bottom of the balance pan. Later, when Keloğlan brought the scales back, the man found a piece of gold stuck to the pekmez, and so he notified the gendarmes at once of his discovery.

When the gendarmes arrived to arrest the two older brothers, they knocked several times on the door. As they were knocking, the oldest brother said to Keloğlan, "No matter what happens, remember this carefully: You didn't sell the donkey for a bag of gold. We didn't knock down the bekçi or throw the keçi in the well."

"Yes, I'll remember that," said Keloğlan, and he repeated to himself several times, "I didn't sell the donkey for a bag of gold. My brothers didn't knock down the bekçi or throw the keçi in the well."

<sup>1</sup>The village watchman would ordinarily be called a korucu rather than a bekçi, a term applied more often to urban watchmen. The play on words on which the conclusion of this tale turns requires the word bekçi.

<sup>2</sup>A jelly, of varying consistencies, made by boiling down grape juice.

The gendarmes arrested the two older brothers and took them to the village jail. Then they came back and started to question Keloğlan. At first Keloğlan did not know what to say to them, for he was badly frightened but he remembered then the instructions of his older brother. "I didn't sell the donkey for a bag of gold," he said, in confusion, "my brothers didn't knock the keçi down or throw the bekçi in the well."

"Throw the bekçi in the well?" shouted the gendarmes.

"No, no, I didn't mean that," Keloğlan tried to explain, but the gendarmes refused to listen to him. They called for the bekçi, and when he did not answer, they ran to the well, dragging Keloğlan with them. When they arrived at the well with a crowd of people following them, the gendarme — *captain of gendarmes* — said to Keloğlan, "We are going to lower you into the well on a rope so that you can pull out our bekçi."

"All right," said Keloğlan.

When they had lowered Keloğlan to the bottom of the well, the captain called down to him, "Have you found our bekçi yet?"

Keloğlan's hand rested on the ear of the goat. "Did your bekçi have an ear?" he shouted up to them.

"Yes, he did," they all shouted back.

Keloğlan's hand then moved to the goat's wooly skin. "Was your bekçi wearing a fur coat?" he asked them.

"Yes, he was," they shouted back.

Now by this time the bekçi, who had been knocked down by the brothers, had regained consciousness and was performing his duties *of bekçi* again. When he saw the crowd of people gathered, all looking into the mouth of the well, he called to them, "What are you looking for?"

Everyone looked up in amazement, and everyone said, "You!"