

Story 770 (1970 Tape 14)

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Location: Ova Akça village, kaza
merkezi of Bursa, Bursa
Province

TEK-ye A Son's Revenge Against His Mother's Lover *Se*

From Once there was and once there was not--in such a time--
when the sieve was in the straw, when the flea was a barber
and the camel a town crier, when my mother was on the threshold
and my father in his cradle, and I at fifteen was rocking that
İmber cradle, tingir mingir,¹ I must have rocked it too hard, for
he fell out and started to cry. Then my mother grabbed
rolling pin, and my father grabbed the axe, and then I grabbed
the dolma² pan. I was running as they were running after me. I
went little, I went far, and when I looked back I saw that I
had gone only the length of a sack needle.³ Sticking the sack
needle into the ground, I spread my cloak over it and sat down
in its shade. I started eating the dolmas one at a time when
a man came along and said "Selâmünaleyküm."

¹This is onomatopoeia for the sound of rocking.

²The dolma (which means something full or stuffed) uses grape leaves or a green pepper for a container. This container is filled with rice and a small amount of finely ground meat; it may also include a few pine nuts and small dried currants. It is cooked in steam, nowadays in pressure cookers.

³A large needle, about 8 inches in length, used for sewing up burlap sacks.

"Aleykümselâm,"⁴ I said

The man was hungry, but he was also a glutton. How could I have known this? I invited him to eat dolmas with me. Although I had been eating the dolmas one by one, he began to eat them two by two. When I then started eating them two by two, he shifted to eating them three by three. Then when I moved to eating them three by three, he gobbled them four by four. At that rate, of course, the dolmas were soon gone.⁵

Now this is where the tale really begins. Back in those days which I have just described, there was a widow with an only son. He was about sixteen years old. The boy's father had died very recently. One day when the boy was looking through things at his home, he found a strange stick. It was about a meter in length, and cut into this stick were many notches—about 200 in all. He asked his mother, "What are all the notches on this stick for? Is it some sort of a calendar?"

She said, "I do not care to talk about that stick." When her son kept insisting on knowing what the stick meant, she said, "Perhaps you are now old enough so that I can tell you. The notches on that stick indicate the number of times I met a gentleman of this town, a wealthy man. Each time we met and spent time together, I made a notch in this stick."

⁴Traditional exchange between Muslim strangers: Peace be unto you / And may peace be unto you, too.

⁵Everything to this point constitutes a tekerleme, a set of nonsensical jingles preceding a folktale, used as an attention-getter. The absurdity of the images is more humorous in Turkish than in English, for they are expressed with a good bit of rhyming, near-rhyming, puns, and other verbal effects.

Story

Greatly disturbed by this infidelity of his mother, the son set about discovering who her lover was. While he was doing this, he let his hair grow very long until it was the length of a girl's hair. He had a tailor make a lady's dress for him that would fit someone his size. Then, after he had identified his mother's lover, he put on this dress, made up as a girl, and went to the lover's home. He knocked on the door, and when the owner opened it, he told him several lies about himself and then asked, "Would you care to hire me as maid servant in your home? My name is Ayşe."

The wealthy man thought that they could use another servant, and so he hired Ayşe. She he started washing dishes, cooking, and doing the house cleaning. The gentleman and his wife had three daughters, and Ayşe quickly made friends with them. In her spare time, Ayşe would play and wrestle with these girls. These three daughters were bored with their lives because they were not permitted to leave their home except with their parents. They were interested in becoming acquainted with boys, but they were never permitted to see boys. When they spoke frequently of this to Ayşe, she he made a plan to help them.

One day when they were alone, Ayşe said, "If I pray and you say 'Amen' to my prayer, perhaps Allah will accept that prayer and turn one of the four of us into a man. I am saying this only as a joke, of course, but trying it might amuse us for a while." The other three laughed and accepted this idea

Story 770

Ayşe prayed and the girls said, "Amen."

Then Ayşe said, "Feel your bodies all over and see if there has been any change in you."

Each of the girls felt herself and said, "There is no change in me."

"Let me try praying again," said Ayşe. She prayed and asked them to examine themselves again, but still they found no change.

"Let us try praying for a third time, then." She did this, but none of the daughters experienced any change. "Let me examine myself," Ayşe said, "and see if I have changed any." After she had looked at herself, she said, "Yes, yes, I have changed just a little bit."

This encouraged them to pray several more times. After three more prayers, Ayşe said, "It is a miracle! I have become just like a man!" Ayşe's purpose was, of course, to take revenge upon the wealthy man who was her his mother's lover. Ayşe became the male friend of these three girls, but they never told their parents of this. By making love to them day after day, he took the virginity of all three girls.

The father of these three girls was quite old, but his wife was still relatively young. Ayşe now began to make advances to the wife, too, and soon he was visiting her secretly several times a week

One day the wealthy gentleman suggested that the family

Story 770

go to a picnic place and spend a few hours there. He had designs upon Ayşe, and he planned to seduce her [him] by means of this outing. They went to a nearby picnic place. When they were about to eat the roasted lamb which they had brought with them, the gentleman said, "Oh, I forgot my cigarettes. I must go home for them, but it will not take me long. You just wait here for me. I'll be back soon." This was his way of being alone with Ayşe, for she [he] had not gone on the picnic with the family.

When he got home, he made a fuss over Ayşe, patting her [him] and saying, "How are you? Are you well?" and so on. He kept getting closer and closer to her, and Ayşe realized what he wanted.

Right then a ⁶(helva) seller passed along the street before the house, carrying a pair of scales and shouting, "The helva man is coming! The helva man is coming!"

When Ayşe heard this, she [he] said to the gentleman, "If you will buy me a large cone of helva, as large as a conical hat, I shall give you what you want."

The gentleman raised the window sash--they were the kind of windows you can slide up and down--stuck his head outside, and said to the helva dealer, "Give me a kilo of helva."⁷

⁶Helva is a candy made of sesame oil, wheat flour, and honey. It is probably the most popular confection in Turkey.

⁷The kind of helva sold on the street is much lighter and fluffier than the kind sold in shops. It is so light that it

Story 770

Right then, Ayşe slammed the window down on his neck, leaving the man's head outside but his body in the room. Ayşe was a strong young man, and he kept holding the window firmly against the man's neck while he raped him. When the helva seller had managed to weigh a kilo of his product, Ayşe had not yet finished what she [he] was doing, and so the man called out, "Weigh me another kilo of helva!" This continued until the gentleman had ordered five kilos of helva, at which time Ayşe was finished with him. The gentleman then dressed and returned to the picnic.

When he got there, the family was cutting up the roasted lamb so that they could eat it as soon as he was ready. When they started to eat, one of the girls took a rib of lamb and laid it aside, saying, "This piece belongs to our sister Ayşe." Each of the other daughters also laid aside a piece of lamb for Ayşe. The mother then set aside still another piece of lamb for Ayşe

The father then said, "The man who did that to all of you did the same to me, and so here is another piece for him. In fact, let us just send him the whole lamb!" After they had

is known as "Foam Helva." It is of a consistency similar to that of cotton candy. It would be almost impossible to weigh up a whole kilo of this, for a mass weighing a kilo would be very large--at least the size of a bushel basket.

returned home, this wealthy gentleman tried to find some way of getting rid of the troublesome boy who had pretended to be a girl. He had great difficulty finding a satisfactory way.

One day a woman came to his house to ask for the hand of one of his daughters to marry to her son. "I have come to ask the hand of one of your daughters, but I have a condition that must be met."

"What is your condition?"

"Well, here in my hand is an ibrik.⁸ I want a girl who can urinate in this ibrik without splashing over the mouth of the spout."

The first daughter urinated in the ibrik, but she splashed over the outside. Neither the second nor the third daughter was able to do any better. The three daughters then suggested, sister Ayşe also try." When sister Ayşe tried, she [he] not splash a single drop

"All right," said the woman, "I'll take that girl." In this way Ayşe became engaged to the woman's son. A wedding date was set soon afterwards

When the wedding arrangements were being discussed, Ayşe said, "Now I have a condition for accepting this marriage."

⁸An ibrik is a Turkish water pitcher. It has a long, curved neck similar to the neck of a silver coffeepot used to pour coffee from at formal receptions.

T284
Sister Ayşe

"What is it?" they asked.

"I want a mute to be the driver of the carriage that carries me from the wedding to the home of the bridegroom."⁹

A mute coachman was found, and after the wedding ceremonies had ended, he was the driver of the carriage carrying the bride from one village to the other. It was a coach with a tent-like canopy over the top, and on the inside there was a curtain between the driver and the bride. As the procession moved slowly along, the bride picked up an apple from the food basket and, after pulling the curtain aside, hit the mute driver on the back of the head with it. When the mute looked back, Ayşe took out his penis and waved it at the driver.

The mute was amazed to discover that the bride was a man. He tried to explain to those in the carriages ahead what he had seen, but because he couldn't talk, he had great difficulty in making them understand. He made a strange noise that went, "Whee, wheel!" When he tried to show the other drivers what the bride had, he made an indecent gesture. People mistaking his intentions started beating him. They even tried to remove

⁹Most rural Turks are exogamous, the bride and groom coming from different villages. After all ceremonies of the wedding have been completed, a group of the bride's relatives and friends accompany her, along with her dowry and other possessions, to the home of the bridegroom. In some cases the bride may ride on a led horse. In more affluent circumstances, she may ride in a coach, and the entire entourage may constitute a small caravan.

the mute from the driver's seat, but Ayşe would not permit this

"No one can remove my mute," she said.

procession started forward again, but every once in a while Ayşe would hit the mute in the head with another apple, and the whole uproar would commence once more. Finally, after much shouting and confusion, they at last reached the home of the bridegroom, where the girl was lifted out of the carriage and presented to her husband.

Later, when the bride and groom were left alone in the nuptial chamber, Ayşe also *+ romantically* raped the groom and then fled. He felt that his revenge against his mother's lover was complete.