

Story 696 1981 Tape 4)

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The Carpenter and the Goldsmith

There once lived in a certain city a carpenter and a goldsmith. The goldsmith said, "I am the better artist,

I shall live in this town as such." But the carpenter made the same claim. They finally applied to the padişah of that area to settle their dispute. They said, "Let each us demonstrate his skill, and whichever has the greater skill will remain here in this city, and the other will leave."

The goldsmith set to work and made a large golden tray^{Author's} on which a golden hound chased a golden rabbit. The hound was forever chasing the rabbit. This object became a great wonder to all who saw it. The carpenter was then asked to demonstrate his skill, and he said that he would do so outside. He built a box that was just like a helicopter plane.¹ He climbed into it, ascended into the sky, and then returned safely to the ground. "Oh, it is amazing," everyone said. "You are the one to remain here, and the goldsmith is the one who should leave the city

They used to have the carpenter bring his box to the

¹Having a helicopter in the time of padişahs is a very obvious anachronism.

holiday festivals, climb into it, and fly around to entertain the people. One day he was called again to bring his flying box and demonstrate to the crowd its ability to fly about. The padişah's son said, "This time I shall fly it." He had accompanied the carpenter on some earlier flights, and he had learned how to manage this piece of equipment, and the carpenter confirmed his ability to do so. The young man pushed the correct button to make the box rise, but when he wanted to descend, he pushed the control lever to make the machine go forward at a great speed. The result was that he was carried a great distance to a faraway land

As the young man walked about the streets of the city where he landed, carrying the box under one arm, he met a ⁹⁹⁻¹⁰⁵ witch woman, to whom he said, "O witch woman, what is the name of this country?"

"This city is called İstanbul."

"Oh, is there really such a city?"

"Young man," she said, "Where do you come from?"

"Oh, I am from such-and-such a country."

"Well, what are you doing here?"

"Please do not ask me that, grandmother. I am a hapless, lonely person here."

The witch woman said, "I too am a very lonely person. Why don't you stay with me? You can be my son, and I shall be your mother."

The son of the padişah thought that he might become herdsman for that section of the city, and he was soon accepted that position. That evening the witch woman went to the muhtar² of that mahalle³ and asked that the young man be given that job. But he was the son of a padişah. How could he know to handle such a job? What did he know about herding cattle? When he took the bullocks out to the pasture, he would not let them wander at all. That is not the way to herd bullocks. Let them roam freely for a short distance. Some will wish to go to the watering place; some will seek the shade and lie down; some will find good grass for grazing. Gather them together in the evening, and then after the heat of the sun has gone, allow them to graze again.

See island boys 100-105

One day the young man saw far away in the sea a large building, and he decided to go there. At nightfall, he climbed into his flying box and flew there. Landing on the roof of the building, he walked down to the next level where there were many doors. Opening one of these doors, he saw a girl sleeping in that room. Opening a second door, he discovered another sleeping girl. The first thirty-nine doors that he opened each disclosed a sleeping girl. In the fortieth room he found sleeping the daughter of a padişah. Taking just one look at this girl, he

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Pmair

²The muhtar is the head man of a village or of a district (mahalle) in a town or city. He is the only elected official seen by and/or known by most rural people.

³A mahalle is a district in a town or city. It is comparable to a ward in American cities.

could see that she was superior to the other girls

Entering her room, he put it a state of disorder, changing the position of the furniture, switching the candles at the head of her bed and at the foot of her bed, switching the candles on the right side of her room and those on the left. Finally he kissed the side of the girl's face gently and left. Climbing back onto the roof, he got into his box and returned to İstanbul

In the morning when the daughter of the padişah awakened, she found her room turned upside down. She shouted to her servants, "You whores! What have you done to my room?"

"Lady sultan," said one of the servant girls, "we put you to bed, said goodnight, and then retired to our own rooms. When we arose this morning, we found you in this condition, but we do not know who is responsible for this disorder and confusion."

"Well, apparently someone has some designs on me. May it turn out to be a good person!"

The young man made a habit of visiting that building in the middle of the sea. The next evening when all was quiet, he climbed into his flying box and went to the girl's house. This time, however, the girl saw him coming, for he stayed up that night. In order to stay awake, she cut her finger slightly and put salt in the cut. This time the young man

Lady -
chance

Salt

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went straight to her room, turned its contents upside down, and again switched all the candles around. But when he was about to kiss the cheek of the girl, she grabbed him by the wrist and asked, "Are you the ghost of a human being or are you a jinn?"⁴

*Formulaic
again
+*

"Neither a jinn nor the ghost of a human being but simply a creature of God. And who are you?"

*Am man
Am man*

"I am the daughter of the Padişah of İstanbul.

"Well, I am the son of the Padişah of Georgia."

It seemed to be the will of ^{Allah} God that they should come together in this way. It seemed to be their ^{Kismet} destiny to become lovers in this way.

*Formulaic
Again*

["Did you wish to buy?"

"Yes. And did you wish to sell?"

"Yes."]⁵

Six months later the parents of the girl came to her house in the midst of the sea to visit her. The girl's face was pale. The front part of her skirt was short and the back part of it was long. Her belly was greatly swollen. Her mother immediately began to vent her anger at her father:

⁴The formulaic question here is "Inmisin cinmisin?"

⁵These questions and answers are rhetorical. The narrator carries on this interpolated conversation with himself to indicate the mutual consent to the lovemaking.

fourth
Exp

"You shut my daughter up in a castle! May your doors be shut! May the fire in your hearth expire!⁶ You put her in a building in the middle of the sea where she has no place to walk for exercise. Now see what has happened! Her belly has swollen terribly!"

Her padişah father had *Physicians* doctors called. All of them examined her carefully, but none of them dared to tell the padişah the fact that the girl was *pregnant*. A crazy fellow approached the ruler and asked, "My padişah, shall I tell you the truth about this matter or shall I tell you a lie?"

"Tell me the truth."

"Well, then, the truth is that your daughter is not ill at all. She is soon going to have a baby."

"Who is there who would, for very fear of me, go to her?"

In those days there were *Remil*⁷ casters who could

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⁶In earlier times maintenance of the fire in the family hearth was equated with survival. To have one's hearth extinguished was to have one's family destroyed. The term is used numerous times in this sense in the tenth-century Book of Dede Korkut.

⁷Remil is a form of geomancy. Cubical or nearly cubical objects--dice or blocks of wood or sheep knuckles--have numbers marked on each facet. When three or four of these cubes are cast to the ground, the upturned facets show three or four numbers. Each number (or other symbol) has previously been assigned a certain meaning, and by putting together the numbers, supposedly some statement or message will be revealed. Many tales tell of the discovery of lost or stolen objects by means of remil messages. Thieves are apprehended by clues provided by remil casters.

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discover things unknowable to others. The padişah gathered all the remil casters in the kingdom and ordered them, "Cast your remil and explain this mystery to me!"

After much casting of remil it was determined that whoever it was who came to and then left this house in the sea was coming through the air. It was decided to spread a heavy layer of pitch on the roof so that wherever and however anyone landed there, he would be caught in the pitch. So this plan was followed and the pitch was spread. The young man knew nothing about this, of course.

When he landed on the roof that night, the young man saw the pitch. He gathered a few rocks and used them to prop up the box above the pitch. He lay with the girl again that night and departed in the morning. But in getting to his box the young man could not help getting some pitch on his clothes. In the morning when he returned, he asked the old woman with whom he lived to wash the pitch from his clothes. It was time to take the bullocks to pasture, but they were still talking at this time.

Another remil was cast, and it revealed that again someone had arrived at and departed from the castle in the sea by air. The padişah issued an order: "Let every house in İstanbul be searched, and let anyone discovered to be wearing pitch-covered clothes be captured!"

After searching many houses, the padişah's men finally came to the witch woman's house and found the young man's pitch-covered clothes in a heap on the floor, where he had left them. Going to the bullock pasture they captured the young man, saying, "Come along, you pimp who has slept with the padişah's daughter!"

"I have an old mother who lives over yonder. At least let me first go and say goodbye to her. Then you may do whatever you will to me." Saying this, he quickly mounted his flying box and off he went. One of the padişah's men tried to grab the box, but the young man pushed him away. Another man, who was dangling from the box as it left the ground, fell and broke both his legs

The young man flew immediately to the girl and said, "Get up! Get up and climb into the box. Our secret has been discovered!" She did as he directed, and they escaped at once. While they were still flying through the sky, the girl gave birth to her child. Descending at some place unknown to them, they saw a light not far away. The young man said, "You stay here while I go and get some fire from that place where the light is located. We shall feed the child and then proceed on our journey."

The source of the light happened to be the hideout of forty thieves, all of whom were asleep and snoring at that

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time. From tree branches hung the carcasses of a number of slaughtered sheep. The young man said to himself, "Let me take some of this meat to cook and eat." Taking meat and some fire, he reentered his box to fly away, but the box caught fire and would not fly. Putting the box under one arm, he took some fire in one hand and some meat in the other and started back to the place where the girl waited. It was some distance that he had to walk, and as he grew tired, he discarded first the fire, then the meat, and finally the box. He searched and searched for the girl

In the morning one of the thieves arrived at the fountain where the girl had been left. Taking ablutions there, he said his prayers. Turning to the girl then, he said, "I must sleep with you."

"I have just given birth to a child. God would not sanction such a thing."

"Well, then, this is an impossible situation. I shall either have you or kill you."

Realizing that she could not dissuade this man, the girl said, "I shall not be united with you until I have washed you thoroughly." She had the thief undress and sit by the fountain. She kept pouring water on him and soaping him until his head was completely covered with a large ball of soapsuds. She said, "Wait just a minute while I get some water to rinse you

off." But what she did while he was blinded by the soapsuds was to put on his clothes and mount his horse. Then she shouted, "O thief!"

Opening one eye, the robber saw the girl astride his horse with a drawn sword in her hand. He begged her to have mercy on him. "I shall have no more pity for you than you did for me. If you do not search for my child, who has disappeared, and find him, you will not be able to escape from me till Doomsday." Actually, another robber had come along and picked up the child. This second robber now searched for the woman, carrying her child on his back. At the same time, her husband, the son of the Padişah of Georgia, was searching for her. Well, let us leave them there searching.

Riding along on horseback, the girl reached the camp of the forty thieves, all of whom were still sleeping. Hearing her horse approach, however, they awakened. They stopped her and stripped her of her weapons and her male clothing.

The next night the chief of the robbers wished to sleep with the girl. "Come over here to my bed," he said.

"All right," she said, "but I must go to the toilet first."

"You mean to escape! Here--I shall tie this rope around you and hold the other end while you go to the toilet.

In the darkness the girl untied the rope from her waist

tied it to a small tree. Then she fled. When the chief of robbers pulled on the rope, he felt only a heavy weight, he realized that the girl had escaped. As he pursued she ran wildly hither and thither, helter skelter, and thus eluded him. She continued fleeing, night after night, until she at last reached the territory of Georgia, which was husband's land.

One day as she was walking across a plain, she encountered a shepherd. "Give me that goat," she said to him. "I want only the skin. The meat will be yours."

Turning the goat skin inside out, she used part of it to cover her head and hide her hair. She now looked quite bald, and she pretended that she was a keloqlan.⁸ ¹⁰⁸⁻¹¹⁰ Entering a large city one day, she walked up and down its streets in search of work. At last she was accepted as an apprentice to a baker.

The padişah of that land had recently died, and his son was lost. The people decided to select a new padişah. In those days they used a bird to make such a selection. A tame bird *State Bird*

⁸A keloqlan is, literally, a bald boy. Boys are not normally bald but may become so as a result of ringworm infection of the scalp. In folktales the youngest child is often a keloqlan. This may have an element of realism in it, for it might well be the youngest child who would be least able or likely to keep himself clean enough to avoid ringworm infestation. The keloqlan, though unfortunate and pitied, is also thought to be lucky and shrewd. The type is the protagonist of a great many Turkish tales, especially trickster tales. ¹⁰⁸⁻¹¹⁰

would be released, and the man on whose head the bird would alight would be elected padişah.⁹

As the crowd was gathering for the bird-election of a padişah, the keloğlan said to the baker, "Let me also go and watch this election

you stay here and bake good bread to sell to the crowd. What good would it do you to go? Even if the bird should land on your head, a keloğlan could not become padişah."

I do not want to go in hope of becoming padişah. I simply want to watch the ceremony."

right, then. Lock up the shop and go."

So the keloğlan went to the public square where a great many people had gathered. They were as numerous as a Doomsday crowd.¹⁰ He stood off at one side of the crowd. When the bird was released, it flew straight to the keloğlan and landed on his head. "No, no!" many shouted. "It is a mistake It was going to land on the head of the son of Ahmet, but this

⁹This special bird is called the Talih Kuşu, the Bird of Fortune. It was also known as the State Bird. Any instance when a bird lands on a head is considered lucky for the owner of that head. The situation has gone into figurative language. Thus anyone who has a lucky break may be said to have had the Bird of Fortune land on his head.

¹⁰On Doomsday, when all of the dead shall arise from their graves, the earth will be very crowded, for all of the generations of mankind will be there at the same time.

keloğlan got in the way!" But, a second time, when they released the bird, it again landed on the head of the keloğlan. After this happened a third time, they grabbed the girl [as keloğlan] and shut her inside a toilet room. But when they released the bird again, it flew around and around until it found her, and again it settled upon her head. The people then agreed, "Instead of the son of Ahmet, let us make the keloğlan our padişah."

In this way, the girl became padişah and sat upon the throne. One of her first acts was to have an inn¹¹ built and alongside it a fountain. On this fountain she had two pictures of herself painted. One showed her as a girl, and one showed her as a warrior--as the chief of the robbers had seen her. She gave orders that anyone who came to the inn, at any time of the day or night, was to take ablutions at the fountain and then say his prayers in the clearing where the fountain stood. She also ordered that when any traveler, straightening his back after taking his ablutions, gave a painful sigh--"Of-f-f-f!" --when he looked up and saw either the picture of the girl or the picture of the warrior

¹¹The word used here is han. The word means inn, but an inn in the sense of a caravanserai rather than a hotel. Travelers came on beasts of burden and sometimes were accompanied by other livestock. The han had a walled courtyard to accommodate the animals and protect them while the travelers were accommodated inside the central building.

this fact should be reported to her immediately

After seven years had passed, the young man who was this girl's betrothed husband returned to the land of his father. He reached the (inn) when it was almost time for the noon prayers to take place. The servants said to him, "You must take your ablutions and then perform your prayers here."

"Oh, I am so very tired," he answered. "Do not compel me to do this now."

"But this is the padişah's order!" they said.

He arose and took his ablutions, but as he straightened up from the fountain, his gaze fell upon the picture of the girl. He looked at her and gave a long and painful sigh "Of-f-f-f-f!"

When the servants heard this, they approached him again and said, "The padişah wants to see you."

"What does he want with me?"

"Come along, quickly!" Taking him to the ruler, they said, "Our padişah, when this young man saw the picture of the girl on the fountain, he gave a painful sigh."

As soon as the young man came into her presence, the girl recognized him immediately, but he did not recognize her. She said, "Take him down to the basement of the palace

and place a batman¹² of raw cotton before him and let him clean it by hand."¹³

Three or five days later¹⁴ the robber with the child on his back arrived at the inn. While taking his ablutions, he noticed the picture of the girl at the fountain and gave a painful sigh. They said to him, "Finish your prayers here and then go to the padişah." When he appeared before the padişah with the child on his shoulder, the servants said, "Your majesty, this fellow gave a painful sigh when he saw the picture of the girl on the fountain."

The girl recognized him too as soon as she saw him, though he did not know who she was. "Take him to the basement also and let him also separate cotton," she said.

The other robber also came to the inn. The servants there said, "Friend, you heard the clock striking. It is time to take ablution and say your prayers." After washing

¹²A batman is an old measure of weight varying, at different times, from 5.5 to 22 pounds.

¹³This is the separating of the lint from the seeds of the cotton, a process nowadays usually done by a cotton gin.

¹⁴In situations where the English-speaking person might say "a couple" or "a few," the rural Turk usually says "üç beş," meaning "three or five."

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himself and straightening up, he saw the girl's picture, and gave a painful sigh, "Of-f-f-f!"

The servants said, "When you have finished performing your prayers, the padişah wishes to see you." When he arrived in the padişah's presence, he, like the others, was sent to the basement to work on the cotton.

After they had worked for about a week on the cotton the padişah had all three men brought before a council of all of her viziers and ministers to be tried. "I want each of you to tell his life story and to tell it without lying. If you should tell any lie about this, your head will be chopped off." The young man was the first to tell his life story, and when he had finished, the padişah said, "You have told the truth." She said the same thing after the robber carrying the child had told his story. And she said it once more after the chief of robbers had finished speaking.¹⁵

She gave the chief of robbers a peck of gold and said to him, "Go and cultivate your father's farm!" To the robber who had carried the child on his shoulder for seven years she said, "You will become my grand vizier." To the

¹⁵There is considerable truncating here. In most tales of abused wives or abused innocent maidens, this final confession by the girl's persecutors is given in detail, and the audience hears from the lips of these characters what it had heard earlier from the lips of the narrator.

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young man | she said, "Do you know the reason for my trying
you here? I am your wife, and you are my husband. By your
returning | here you have demonstrated that I am an honest
woman. Here is your throne and here is your crown."

He became padişah, and the robber who had carried the
child for | seven years became grand vizier. They ate and drank
and lived | comfortably.