

Story 2080 (1967 Tapes 5, 6, and 7)

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67

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The Story of Melek Shah and Güllühan²

Hey, my friends! In the olden times, in the past days of history, in the country of Ceylan³ there lived a shah named Adil Shah. He had a garden called "The Garden of Heaven." This garden was such a wonderful and unusual place that there was no match for it in this world. Adil Shah used to visit his garden every day and spend some time in it. Most of the time he took his vizier with him.

One day while they were chatting in the garden, Adil Shah took a deep breath and then said, "Aah, aah!"⁴ If someone had seen him while he was sighing, that person could have thought that Adil Shah was burning in hell and with smoke coming out of his head.

Hearing the shah's sighing in grief, the vizier asked, "My shah, why did you take a deep breath like that and say 'aah'? There are some people who do not have food either for dinner or for breakfast. Even so, they do not worry about anything. You, however, have everything, but are still unhappy. What makes you worry?"

Adil Shah replied, "Hey, my vizier, listen to me. The wealth of this world remains here. My properties, wealth, and land are enough for all the people in this world, but who will own them when I die? I do not have a child at whom they can point and say, 'He is Adil Shah's son or daughter.' That is what I am worried about."

¹ Aşık is a term used for singing poets, the minstrels or bards of medieval time and of Turkey today. The word is also used for a person who is in love with somebody.

² The story is also titled "The Story of Adil Shah and Güllü Han."

³ Ceylan is a Turkish pronunciation of Ceylon, which has been renamed Sri Lanka.

⁴ Aah, aah! is an expression indicating sorrow and grief.

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A few days passed after the talk between the shah and his vizier about the shah's worry. One day, at Adil Shah's suggestion, the vizier and the shah decided to take a little journey for a few days. They disguised themselves as common people, mounted their horses, and rode away from the city. They wandered aimlessly for a few days, and one day around noontime they reached a fountain on their way. In order to get some rest and perform the noon prayers, they dismounted, took ritual ablution⁵, and then began performing the prayers.

When they were about to finish their prayers, they saw approaching them an old man holding a little boy by the hand. Finally, the old man and the boy reached the point where the shah and the vizier were sitting on the ground. The shah, of course, remembered his being childless when he saw the boy, and thought to himself, "Aah, how I wish I had a son like this boy. I wish I had nothing but a son like him."

Meanwhile the old man greeted them, "Greetings, hükümdar⁶, and greetings to his vizier."

Astonished by the man's words, the hükümdar and his vizier stared at the old man's face. They were surprised because even in their disguise as ordinary people, the old man was able to recognize them. Yet the hükümdar asked, "Father, what do you know that caused you to say 'hükümdar and his vizier'? Like you, we, too, are poor dervishes⁷, and others call us dervishes."

⁵ According to Islam, before performing prayers ordered by God, a person has to take ritual ablution. The ablutions referred to here are, of course, the ritual washing before each namaz service, whether at the mosque or in private. Hands, elbows, face, mouth, nose, ears, and feet are all washed three times, and neck and hair are cleaned with wet hands before religious cleanliness is attained.

⁶ Hükümdar is one of the titles for Ottoman rulers. In English it is an equivalent of king. It should also be noted that when referring to a ruler the narrator of this story frequently switches from one title to another. He uses the titles shah, sultan, padishah, and hükümdar freely. It should not be evaluated as a discrepancy of the narrator, since almost all these titles imply the same person or the ruler, and since they are well understood by the audience, there is no reason for the narrator to hesitate about moving from one title to another.

⁷ Dervish is a member of a sect in Islam who has taken a vow of poverty.

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The old man said, "Is that so? I recognize not only you, but also everybody in this world. Further, I know what you have in your minds. The hükümdar, for instance, was thinking, 'If I had a son like this boy.' As you have heard, there is no lie or exaggeration in my words. Is there?"

With the words of the old man, the hükümdar held the man's hand and said, "You have proved that you see the unseen, you hear the unheard, and I have been praying to God for having my wish granted. Now I have got you here, and you might have been sent by God. Tell me if there is a cure for my problem."

The old man said, "Let us pray to God. God willing, you will have a son like mine, and become very happy with having him."

Adil Shah begged the old man, "Help me with this, my dervish father. If something occurs, it must have occurred because of you. Is there anything better than helping a hopeless person?"

The dervish first prayed to God, and then reached into his pocket, from which he took out an apple. Giving the apple to the hükümdar, he said, "Take this apple. You must eat half of it, and have your wife eat the other half. God willing, you shall have a son. However, do not name the child until I come to your palace." Having said those words, the dervish disappeared as suddenly as he had appeared.

Having the dervish lost before their eyes, the hükümdar wanted to search for him, but the vizier stopped him and said, "My shah, have you lost your mind? Have you not recognized him yet? He was sent to us by God. Do not become suspicious. Let us return to the palace."

With a joyful smile on his face, Adil Shah returned to his palace with his vizier. They worked on their daily tasks for the rest of the day. In the evening the hükümdar walked to his private quarters where he called his wife and said, "My dear, would you bring me the golden tray and the diamond-hilt knife?" The sultana rushed to the kitchen and returned very quickly with the tray and the knife. The shah divided the apple into two pieces, and then each of them ate a half. That night Adil Shah and his wife slept together and reached their desires.

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In a few months onward from that night, the front part of the sultana's skirt became shorter and shorter,⁸ and while she was in that condition nine months, nine days, and nine hours of time were completed⁹.

If you ask about time, it flies on the wind.

If you ask about our story, it is carried in words¹⁰.

The sultana gave birth to a son who looked like a bright ball from heaven, and he was as healthy and beautiful a baby as can be. When they informed Adil Shah that he had just become the father of a son, Adil Shah immediately performed a short prayer, and said, "Thank God." Following the performance of the prayer, Adil Shah ordered, "Feed the poor, release the prisoners, and light the city with more lights. Let everywhere become as bright as it can be, and let the broken-hearted feel joy and happiness as much as they can."

The years passed very quickly, and Adil Shah's son became seven years old. He was at the age to begin his education, but he had been given no name yet. The viziers and the servants in Adil Shah's palace all admired the boy's intelligence, and they eventually decided to talk to Adil Shah about the boy's need for education, and, on the other hand, the problem of his being without a name. One of them said, "Our shah, it is the time for sehzade¹¹ to be educated. He should not be spending his time for anything else but his education. You should send him to a school. But how would a child go to school without a name? He is absolutely in need of a name to be given before he attends classes. Have you paid close attention to this problem? We do not know how to manage

⁸ This expression indicates her pregnancy; as her belly became swollen because of the baby, the skirt she was wearing was held up in the front. This expression is especially common in rural areas of Turkey.

⁹ Among the people of rural areas this is a folk expression indicating the period of human gestation.

¹⁰ These two lines are employed by the asık here to express the transition of time and events in the story. These kinds of expressions are commonly used by the asık in the storytelling tradition in Turkey.

¹¹ Sehzade is a Persian loan word in Turkish meaning son of a shah. It is equivalent to the English term prince.

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it." The viziers and the servants wanted the sehzade to be educated, but the boy had not been given a name.

The discussion was carried to Adil Shah's council, where each person began suggesting a name, but Adil Shah refused them and their proposed names. "It cannot be handled this way," he said. "I cannot name my boy as long as the dervish is not present."

One of the viziers tried to persuade Adil Shah. "My shah, what if the old man has died, and never returns? He has not shown himself here for the last seven years. Do you think he would still come? Instead of waiting for him to come, is it not better if we find a nice name for the sehzade?" But no matter how hard the viziers tried to convince Adil Shah, the shah wanted to wait as he had promised. Having failed to convince Adil Shah, the viziers were getting ready to leave his court, but before they left, suddenly an old man appeared in the court and said, "Hey, my friends, what have you been trying to do here? What is that very important matter which you discussed?"

One of them answered, "Our shah has a seven-year-old son. The boy, however, has still not been given a name. Today we gathered here to give our shah our opinions of a suitable name for the boy, but Adil Shah has refused our suggestions."

The dervish said, "Indeed, you are right in offering suggestions, but your shah is right, too, in keeping his promise. You are, on the other hand, wrong about thinking that the boy has been without a name. His name had been given long before he was born by the person who caused him to be born. Now, let me tell you his given name; his name is Melek Shah. Do you like this name?"

They said, "It is a very good name. We could not have chosen a better name than that one." While they were voicing their approval of the boy's name, the dervish once again disappeared.

Following a name-giving ceremony, Adil Shah sent Melek Shah to a school. Melek Shah became a very bright and hardworking student. All of his teachers were pleased to have such a student, one who paid close attention to his classes and his teachers. He was successful in passing his courses, achieving the best grades all the time. Years followed one after another, and Melek Shah kept going to school and getting the best grades. Finally, he completed his education at school and then became interested in

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weapons and fighting. He was trained by master archers and warriors who taught him all the skills they had. Shortly, Melek Shah had mastered armor, weapons, archery, wrestling, fighting, and horse riding.

When he had completed his training, he began spending his time in the wilderness, in pastures and forests. He was going on hunting expeditions by himself. Meanwhile, Melek Shah became eighteen years old. He was not only brave and strong, but also a very handsome young man with whom all the girls in Ceylan had fallen in love. Melek Shah, however, never showed any interest in those girls. He was enjoying himself and wandering from one place to another.

Once while Melek Shah was on his daily journey, an old man appeared on his way. The old man began, "Wait, my son. Where are you going? What is your destination?"

"I am just wandering around, my old father," replied Melek Shah.

The old man took from his shoulder bag something wrapped with a piece of leather, and while giving it to Melek Shah he said, "Take this. I wish to give you a gift, but do not open it until I pass over that hill." Melek Shah took the parcel, and the old man walked away. Melek Shah waited anxiously until the old man was out of his sight. When he opened the leather wrapping, he was amazed at what he saw: It was a picture of a girl. May her house be demolished! She was like a full moon, surely the most beautiful girl in this world. She was either a houri or a fairy, a remedy for any kind of illness. She was very tall. She had curly hair over her forehead; her eyes were as big as coffee cups; her doubled chin was five hand spans wide. She had a whiteness better than white, and a redness better than red. Her degree of redness was equal to one thousand red colors. If someone had tried to flick her face with his fingers, her face could have shivered for forty days like the essence of honey¹². If you had seen her, you would have chosen to die for her. She was an extremely beautiful girl with a charming face.

¹² The beauty of a girl is described thus in medieval and classical Turkish literature, especially in classical poetry. These descriptions have also passed into the oral tradition, and with minor changes *asiks* are still using them. The beauty, of course, as described here does not mean much in translation, but when the internal rhyming and rhythm are considered, it makes memorable sense in Turkish.

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Having seen such a beauty, Melek Shah did not go any farther, but returned home. He did not even want to talk to anyone in the palace, so he went to his room and lay down. Melek Shah became ill, and his face grew paler and paler every day. Let us see what will happen later on.

Noticing that Melek Shah kept himself in his room lying down all the time, his parents wondered if he were sick. They went to his room and asked, "What has happened to you, Son? Why are you keeping yourself in this room and lying down all the time?"

Let us see how Melek Shah responded to his parents. Apparently, when Melek Shah had looked at the picture of the girl, and upon seeing her picture he had fallen in love with her, God had also granted Melek Shah the ability of minstrelsy. Hence, he did not respond to his parents with plain words, but began singing a song. Let me sing that song for our beys¹³. May you, my beys, remain in good health and never become sad. May God not let the good people in need for the bad people:

I shall tell you; I have now fallen in love;
There is no false information in my words;
I do not tell my secrets to a stranger;
My words will not seem clear to anyone;
My words will not seem clear to anyone.

Aah, aah!
I have been enchanted by a rose;
I am a bouquet of flowers;
I have become sick like a dying rose;
There is no cure for my sickness.

¹³ In Republican Turkey there are no beys. The term refers to a Turkish aristocrat of Ottoman, Seljuk, and pre-Seljuk times, and goes back to the 8th or 9th century and perhaps earlier. The bey was a landed nobleman, sometimes wealthy and often politically powerful. In the 10th-century Book of Dede Korkut he was a tribal chief or one of his close associates. The Turkish bey was roughly equivalent to a British lord or baron.

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I have become a nightingale;
There is no cure for my sickness.

I cry with flooding tears. ||
Full-moon face, crescent eyebrows;
Melek Shah wants to have them.
There is no difficulty harder than this.
Melek Shah wants to have them.
There is no difficulty harder than this.

His father and mother did not get a single clue from his song. Melek Shah sang only that much and then stopped. Since they had no idea what he meant, they asked again, "What has happened to you, Son?"

Melek Shah did not tell them that he had been given a picture of a beauty with whom he had fallen in love. When he was questioned again, he said, "I do not know." Let his parents remain worried about him.

Who was that girl? Whose daughter was she? Melek Shah himself did not know who she was or where she lived. One day, Melek Shah had a dream. In his dream he saw the old man who had given him the picture of the girl. Holding a hand of a girl, the old man was standing. Suddenly they began approaching Melek Shah, and when they reached the point where Melek Shah was, the old man took out a bottle and a cup from his pocket, and gave them to the girl. The girl poured a liquid from the bottle into the cup, and when it was filled she offered the cup to Melek Shah. Melek Shah took the cup, and when he intended to drink the liquid, the old man stopped him, and said, "Wait, my son; wait. Before you drink it, you must tell me for whose love you will drink it."

Melek Shah said, "The pir¹⁴ who offered it knows better than I do."

¹⁴ Pir is the term indicating the founder of a sect. In the Sufi system he is the murşid, the "spiritual director." He claims to be in the direct line of the interpreters of the esoteric teaching of the Prophet and hence holds his authority to guide the aspirant (murid) on the path. But he must himself be worthy of imitation. "He should have a perfect knowledge, both theoretical and practical, of the three stages of the mystical life

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"If the pir knows better, then you must drink it for the love of God, Who has created you and me and everything else in the universe. Drink it for the love of God, Who has created us human beings."

Melek Shah drank the first cupful, which had the taste of a very special beverage that he had never drunk before. It was, indeed, a special beverage with a wonderful taste like that of the beverages in heaven. Melek Shah thought to himself, "I hope he will offer me another cup of it."

His wish came true, for the old man offered him a second cup. My friends, such beverage comes from the heavenly lakes of All-Powerful God. There is an unlimited amount of this liquid in that lake. The old man offered the cup and said, "Take it, my son, and tell me for whose love you will drink it."

"The pir who offered it knows better than I do," replied Melek Shah.

The old man said, "If the pir knows better, you must drink it for the love of Hızır¹⁵, who walks over the oceans and seas, and who saves you when you are in the greatest difficulty. Whenever you need him, he will be ready. He comes very quickly and rescues you." Melek Shah drank the second cupful.

The old man filled the cup for the third time, and said, "Drink this one for the love of the girl standing beside me. She is your beloved, and you are her lover. She is the daughter of Yemen's hükümdar; her name is Güllühan." Melek Shah took the third and

and be free of fleshly attributes." When a pir has proved--either by his own direct knowledge or by the spiritual power (vilayat) inherent in him--the fitness of a murid to associate with other Sufis, he lays his hand on the aspirant's head and invests him with the hurka. The murid need not necessarily receive his investiture from that pir who gave him instruction, who is called the pir-i suhbat. For further reading see R. A. Nicholson, Studies in Islamic Mysticism (Cambridge, 1921) and J. P. Brown, The Darwishes (Oxford, 1927).

¹⁵ Hızır: once a water deity and fertility god--and still both those figures to most farmers in southern Turkey--Hızır is more widely known now as a granter of wishes, a last-minute rescuer from disaster, and a special messenger and agent of God. In these latter three functions he appears fairly frequently in Turkish folktales. Not mentioned by name in the Koran, a chapter of that work was later named after him. He is assumed to be the person instructing Moses in Chapter XVIII of the Koran, where he is referred to by God simply as "our servant."

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last cup and drank it. As soon as the liquid passed through his throat, Melek Shah began feeling love in every part of his body. Then the old man put the girl's image on a mirror. Melek Shah walked toward her and hugged her. Apparently he was hugging his blanket.

Meanwhile, Güllühan was going through the same experience at the same time with Melek Shah. She had the same dream, as well, at her father's palace in Yemen. The dervish made them fall in love with each other. Güllühan began feeling ill, with a high fever caused by the passion of love. The servants informed the shah of Yemen about his daughter's problem. "Our shah, something very strange has occurred, and suddenly your daughter began feeling ill. We do not know what has happened to her," said the servants.

The shah and his wife rushed into Güllühan's room, and upon seeing her lying in her bed they asked, "Daughter, if you allow us we would like to call physicians to examine you. You should let us know what has been bothering you." Then the shah summoned the maids and asked them, "What happened to her?"

"We do not know, our shah," replied the girls. Among them there was an old lady who was called Old Gülcihan, whom the shah asked if she had known anything about Güllühan's illness.

Gülcihan said, "If you could bring me a saz, I would solve this puzzle in a moment." Upon her request, the shah sent one of the servants to bring a saz there. Shortly, the servant returned with a saz and handed it to Gülcihan. With the saz in her hand, Gülcihan walked near Güllühan's bed and began playing.

Hearing the sound of the saz, Güllühan opened her eyes and said, "Hey, lady! That saz is not suitable to your hands; you had better hand it to me. It should be played by my fingers. Give it to me, for God's sake. Let me play and sing, and you should listen to what I sing."

Gülcihan said, "Surely, I will give it to you, but I am afraid that you will not tell the truth. For that reason I cannot give it to you."

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Güllühan replied, "No, no, Gülcihan. I will not exaggerate anything. I will sing what I have learned from my master. I will not make any profit out of it.¹⁶"

Let us hear what she sang:

I have fallen in love with all my heart;
 No stranger can put down the fever I have;
 Every part of my body has been burnt down;
 No stranger can put down the fire in my soul;
 I am burning; I am burning; I am burning.

She sang one more time:

If I grow paler and paler with pain,
 If I ever tire on the path of love,
 If my lover becomes a nightingale and I a rose,
 No stranger, again, can put down my cries.
 I am burning; I am burning; I am burning.

They who have not fallen in love think it is easy;
 Everybody thinks Güllühan has become crazy;
 The fire in my body burns my heart constantly;
 No stranger, again, can put down my cries;
 I am burning; I am burning; I am burning.

Having heard Güllühan's song, the shah and the sultana said, "Our daughter, the boy with whom you have fallen in love must be experiencing a similar passion in his heart. We are sure that by following the instincts of his heart he will find you here. Do not

¹⁶ The words here have nothing to do with the heroine, but those words belong to the minstrel tradition in Turkey. The narrator has an opportunity to employ one of the singing aspects of the minstrel tradition: they sing songs composed by past masters of their tradition.

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worry so much. When he comes here, we will engage you to him by God's permission."

About what should I inform you, my ağas¹⁷? I would like to tell you more about poor Melek Shah. Melek Shah, too, grew paler and paler day after day. Having seen his son in such a bad condition the shah of Ceylan said to his viziers, "I cannot understand what my son's problem is. I am very much concerned about his health."

A vizier said, "Nobody has so far been able to understand his problem. If you allow me, I would like to talk to him once more. I may get some idea about the thing he worries about." Having said this, the vizier went to Melek Shah's room and asked, "My son, Melek Shah, listen to me. Your parents are worried about your health. Tell me whatever the problem is that bothers you."

Melek Shah did not want to explain his problem in plain words. Therefore, he first took his saz, and then began playing. Let us hear what Melek Shah's problem was, and how he explained it:

I saw a fairy in my dream;
I saw a fairy.
No match for her has come into the world,
Has not come to the world.
Since that day I have become crazy;
I have become crazy.
I lost my mind as soon as I saw her,
When I saw her.

¹⁷ An ağa is a rural landowner, sometimes wealthy, often powerful. The word does not indicate an official title but describes an economic status. They are often the principal employers of farm workers, and they are often viewed by their employees as harsh, driving, and abusive. The term ağa is also used in a complimentary way, as an honorific, for a distinguished or just older person than the one using the term. Thus an older brother is called ağa bey by his younger siblings. Ağa bey may be used as a deferential term to one older or more prestigious than the speaker. A taxi driver may refer to his passenger as ağa bey; a salesman speaking to a male customer may call him ağa bey.

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My situation will be disastrous from now on;
 It will be disastrous from now on.
 My eyes will be in tears; my body will be like a violin;
 It will be like a violin.
 I have been in this situation for a long time,
 In this situation for a long time.
 I became destroyed when I saw her,
 When I saw her.

I beg God every time to have mercy on me,
 To have mercy on me.
 This love eventually will make me melt;
 It will make me melt.
 Being away from her is killing me daily,
 Killing me daily.
 I could not understand what kind of a thing this love is,
 What kind of a thing this love is.

[Tape 5 ends here, and the story of Melek Shah and Güllühan continues on tape 6.]

They called my beloved one Güllühan;
 My beloved one is Güllühan.
 If I had been able to meet her once,
 Meet her once.
 I have entered into the world of love,
 Into the world of love.
 Melek Shah is crazy about her,
 Crazy about her.
 Melek Shah is crazy about her,

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Crazy about her.¹⁸

The vizier understood what Melek Shah meant. He went to the shah and said, "My shah, your son has fallen in love with a girl named Güllühan, but I do not know where she is and whose daughter she might be. We must learn more about her and help Melek Shah."

The shah said, "Call Melek Shah here." They called Melek Shah to the shah's court, where the shah asked, "My son, why do you not tell me about your worries? My orders have been performed beyond the boundaries of my country; surely I can find a solution for your problem."

Even though there were many storms in his heart, Melek Shah kept quiet; he was shy and could not tell anything to his father in plain words. He took his saz and began playing and singing:

How difficult it is to live in the world of love;
It is very hard to live in the world of love;
One moment of it is like infinity;
One should write down with a pen this agony.
This agony makes a man remain unconscious.

The shah listened to the song, but still he could not understand what his son meant. Therefore, he asked, "What are you talking about, my son? Why do you not say in simple words so we can understand it easily?"

Melek Shah sang again:

I have become crazy upon drinking the passion of love;

¹⁸ This song is actually sung in stanzaic form. However, the repeated half-lines are inserted by the narrator in order to fill the rhythmic pattern of the melody. It can be easily noticed that when the repeated half-lines are ignored, the song consists of four lines in each stanza.

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I have become paler by being far from my beloved;
 I have pulled out my hair many days because of her love;
 I have dedicated my soul as a slave for Güllühan.

Let Melek Shah burn and cry with his unfulfilled love;
 He should cry as long as he does not see his beloved;
 His mother and father should also be worried about him;
 I should go somewhere I do not know, alone by myself.

With those lines Melek Shah's song was completed.

Having listened to his son's song the shah said, "My son, I have heard your song, but I could not quite understand all of it. Sing more to all of us. Let us hear once more what you are saying." With the permission and a request from his father, Melek Shah took his saz once more and began playing and singing:

Father, feel sorry for your Melek Shah;
 Even mountains cannot bear hearing his cry;
 He has entered and gone on the road of death;
 A heartless one injured your son's heart.

Wherever I go this fate will be with me;
 Wherever I go this love will be with me.

I fell in this trouble when I saw her.
 I cannot deny it; it is my fate.
 If you allow me, I will go to find her.
 A heartless one injured your son's heart;
 A villainous one hurt your son's heart.

Consider me as dead if I do not meet her.
 My words are real; I am not joking.

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My love will guide me on the roads;
I do not need either friend or guide.

Wherever I go, this fate will be with me;
Wherever I go, this love will be with me.

My beloved is called Güllühan.
She is worth both the earth and the universe.
Melek Shah's situation is very hard,
Even though her father is the shah of Yemen,
Even though her father is the shah of Yemen.

Hearing his son's song and understanding his problem made Adil Shah cry aloud. He said nothing, but as an expression of his sorrow he took a deep breath and then shouted, "Eyvah, eyvah!"¹⁹ Adil Shah thought that his son was right to cry and become ill. He knew that falling in love with someone was the most difficult thing in this world. Then he asked, "Well, my son, how can I help you with this trouble?" Actually he did not know what to do or how to help Melek Shah, nor did Melek Shah himself.

Soon after that conversation, Adil Shah became very ill. He became very ill because of his son's unfortunate situation and his having found no solution for it. Despite the power and wealth he had, his inability to help his son at all and his thinking every day about this particular problem affected the shah's health very badly. He could not recover from his illness, and died. He made a gift of his life to you, my ağas. As was said in a phrase, "One who was born will die; one who came will go."

The unexpected death of the shah aroused grief and sorrow in Yemen, and people mourned and lamented after him. Everybody was grieved by the shah's death. Three days after his father's death, Melek Shah became the new shah. The people of Yemen accepted him as their new shah by bowing their heads before Melek Shah's court.

¹⁹ Eyvah is an indication of grief and sorrow.

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Melek Shah put the crown on and sat on the throne for a few days. He performed his ruling duties very well, but he was constantly thinking about his beloved Güllühan.

Finally he decided to talk to his vizier, and said, "You have been faithful to my father as well as to me. I must confess to you that I cannot perform my duties properly while having this fire caused by the love in my heart. I would like to entrust you with the crown and the throne, and I will go to search for my beloved Güllühan. Until I return from my journey you will be in charge of the country. If I die you will become the new shah, but if I return, I will have the crown and the throne back."

Melek Shah prepared himself for the journey he had planned. The next morning he mounted his horse, and when he was just about to leave the city, his mother stopped him. In tears and pulling her hair, she said, "My son, where are you going, and with whom are you leaving me? Your father died, and now I see that you are going somewhere I do not know. What will happen to me? What will happen to the crown and the throne?"

My friends, she did not know that one in love with Güllühan does not care about either the crown or the throne. Melek Shah waited for awhile to let her calm down a little, and then he began playing his saz and singing. Let us hear what he sang. Let him sing, and sing the best song. Let me sing as well as Melek Shah. Let us see to what our beys will listen:

I have made my choice; I cannot change it.
I beg you, Mother, that you not worry.
If Fate shows everything I expected,
I beg you, Mother, that you not worry.

The sultana sang:

Why would I not worry and cry?
You are leaving me alone, by myself.
Will my days pass in sorrow, with laments?
You are leaving me alone, by myself.

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Melek Shah sang again:

You are right, since you are a mother;
 You should not cry for missing your son;
 You must believe me: we will reunite.
 I beg you, Mother, that you not worry.

The sultana sang once more:

Can a son do this? Feel pity for this poor soul.
 Have you no mercy at all for me?
 Unless you return, I have no place in this world;
 You are leaving me alone, by myself.

Melek Shah sang once more:

If I do not meet with my Güllühan,
 I will not pity myself, but die.
 Do you want to be my destroyer?
 I beg you, Mother, that you not worry.

Their exchange of songs was completed with those lines. Melek Shah could not bear to see his mother weeping, and he said, "Mother, if you would like to come with me, we can go together, but I am not going to change my mind; I will go." It seems that she was waiting for such an offer; she agreed to go with Melek Shah.

Though she was forty years old, she looked in her early thirties. She looked even better than a girl in her twenties. Yes, her actual age was more than it seemed and she was still very charming. Too, she was a vivacious woman.

During their journey, Melek Shah did not want to be recognized, and thus did not take any other company with him. The sultana prepared herself and mounted on a horse, and then they rode toward Yemen. After riding for a few days, they reached a

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tower. Despite the fact of its huge walls and giant structure, the place was very calm; it looked like a deserted castle. There was no one at its main gate or nearby. They did not enter the tower, but chose to wait in front of the gate.

While the sun was setting, a man approached the tower. He was Günan Pehlivan²⁰, the owner of the tower. He was a robber who was waylaying the merchants and travelers passing near his tower. When he saw the mother and the son, he thought to himself, "Here come my victims." He came near to them and said, "Come in; come in. This is my home." Günan Pehlivan led them inside the tower, which was furnished like a palace. There he served them very well. When he saw the sultana's face, he immediately desired to have her. He was not only a robber, but he also craved beautiful women. As was mentioned earlier, the sultana, too, was a very passionate woman. Upon seeing this strong pehlivan, she wanted to have him as well.

For awhile Melek Shah left them alone in the room. The sultana used that time as an opportunity to talk to Günan Pehlivan in private. She said, "Come closer to me. I like you very much. I should prefer to live with you from now on. What do you think?"

Despite the fact that Günan Pehlivan always welcomed such passionate women, he was astonished by the sultana's offer, and he could not decide either what to do, or what to say. But he immediately went near her and hugged the beautiful widow.

When they began kissing each other, the sultana said, "Everything is all right for you and me, but one obstacle remains between us, and that is my son."

Günan Pehlivan asked, "What do you mean to say?"

"It is your duty to get rid of this obstacle. I am sure you can do it," said the sultana.

Günan Pehlivan said, "Hey, woman! Look at me carefully. I can do many things, but killing a brave young man is not one of them. That is not my type of work. Brave people should not be killed in a villainous way. What you are suggesting is a treacherous thing to do. I would never even intend to kill a young man." Having said this, Günan Pehlivan turned and looked at the sultana's face, which was very charming. Then he thought to himself a little, and said, "But there is one way to handle this

²⁰ Pehlivan in contemporary Turkish means wrestler. In folk stories and minstrel storytelling tradition, this word usually meant wrestler-warrior.

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problem: There is a rose garden located at a distance of five hours from here. That garden is guarded by a lion which kills any stranger who enters there. What you need to do is to feign illness, and I will find a way to send your son, Melek Shah, to that garden. He will go there and never return. Then you and I can take care of each other and live in happiness." Upon Günan Pehlivan's suggestion, the sultana lay down as if she had suddenly become ill.

When Melek Shah returned, he saw that his mother had become ill. Melek Shah asked, "Mother, what happened to you? What is troubling you?" The sultana did not answer his questions.

Günan Pehlivan said, "My son, do not cry and worry, but listen to me carefully. There is a medicine garden at a distance of five hours from here. If you are able to bring two apples from that garden and have your mother eat them, she will recover from her illness. Those apples are the only means for her to recover."

Upon Günan Pehlivan's suggestion, Melek Shah prepared for a journey to the medicine garden. Seeing his mother in pain hurt Melek Shah very badly, and he wanted her to become well. Apparently she had no problem at all, my friends. She was just feigning illness. Look at that mother! My friends, please pay attention, and evaluate the mother and the son with their ideas. Look very carefully at such a dreadful mother and her deeds.

Melek Shah mounted his horse and rode to the garden. He reached there very quickly, picked up the apples, and was about to leave, but a huge lion with a big mouth blocked his way. The giant lion attacked Melek Shah, but Melek Shah defended himself with his sword. At the end of a furious fight between the two, Melek Shah overcame the lion, and with the apples he returned to the tower. The sultana ate the apples and pretended to become well.

The next morning she again pretended to be ill, and her situation was explained thus to Melek Shah by Günan Pehlivan: "She has pain again, my son."

Melek Shah asked, "Can I do something?"

"There is a pomegranate garden at a distance of two hours from here. You must bring pomegranate fruit from that garden. The pomegranates of that garden work as a

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medicine for any kind of illness. If the pomegranates do not cure your mother's illness, I may think of something else to help her."

Once again, Melek Shah had no idea what kind of game they were playing. He mounted his horse and rode to the pomegranate garden. When he came closer to the garden, he noticed that the gate of the garden was guarded by two lions. Upon seeing Melek Shah, the lions roared and prepared to attack him. Melek Shah, however, did not want to kill them. No matter how furious and fearsome the lions seemed, Melek Shah was not afraid of them. He dismounted from his horse, and then approached the lions carefully, and without showing any signs of fear petted their heads and the hair on their necks. Such an approach and treatment surprised and also calmed the lions. They began swirling around Melek Shah like hounds. Melek Shah hunted a few birds and rabbits and gave them to the lions to eat. The lions began acting more and more friendly toward Melek Shah. Melek Shah played with them a little more, and also hugged them. Later that day, the lions became his guards; one of them began standing at each side of Melek Shah. It seemed as if they had been trained by Melek Shah and that the lions were following every order of Melek Shah. They were not going anywhere away from his sides. The friendship he established with the lions made his task of taking pomegranate fruit to his mother very easy. In order to select the best fruit he walked in the garden, where he came to a fountain. Melek Shah sat at the fountain for awhile, but shortly he fell asleep.

Apparently, in that garden lived forty robbers who also killed people who entered the garden without their permission. When they saw a horse, and also found a young man sleeping at the fountain, they thought to themselves they had found a very easy prey on that day, but they did not notice the lions. When they approached Melek Shah very closely, the lions suddenly attacked, and killed them all. Melek Shah was still sleeping. When Melek Shah awoke, he immediately noticed blood on the mouths and the bodies of the lions. He jumped up and looked around, and was astonished to see that there were forty corpses on the ground. As an expression of his gratitude to the lions, he hugged them.

Then Melek Shah began wandering farther in the garden, and somewhere in the middle of it he saw a building. Melek Shah went inside the building, where he heard the

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cries of a girl. Melek Shah searched the building and finally found the girl and asked, "Hey, beauty of the world, who are you? How did you come here, and why are you crying?" She was the daughter of India's shah, and her name was Çeşm-i Naz. She had been kidnapped by the forty robbers, who asked for one thousand sacks filled with gold coins as a ransom for her.

Fearing this stranger as well, she narrated her story in a moment and then began staring at Melek Shah's face as if questioning him. Having carefully examined his physical appearance, she fell in love with this young man, but she, of course, could not tell him anything about her feelings toward him. Melek Shah, on the other hand, had no idea what she was thinking about him. It was because of the love he had been feeling toward Güllühan, whom he constantly thought about, but how could Çeşm-i Naz possibly know that Melek Shah had fallen in love with Güllühan a long time ago? Melek Shah had also a duty to perform: He had to take the pomegranate fruit to his mother.

Melek Shah took Çeşm-i Naz out from the building, and walked with her to the gate of the garden. When they were at the gate, Melek Shah saw an approaching horseman. He waited for him, and when he came near, Melek Shah stopped him, and said, "Hey, brave man! Here is the daughter of India's shah, and if you take her to India, the shah certainly will reward you. I also warn you that I am a magician and that if you harm her or if you act against her while taking her to her father, I assure you that I will be informed about your deeds. If I hear any false doing of yours, I will find and kill you wherever you are. Do you perfectly understand me?" The man feared Melek Shah, and believed what he said. Either by fear or the dream of a reward he would have received, the horseman agreed to take her to India. Melek Shah brought a horse for her from the building, and helped Çeşm-i Naz to mount the horse. When both of them were ready to leave, Melek Shah said to the man, "Take this girl to her father's palace in India, and then if you wish, you may come here; this garden will be yours. I will not let anyone else have it; you are the one who deserves it. This garden, the house, and all of the things in the house are under my control. You may come back and have them all. I will save this place for you." The horseman did not know what to say, but he had a big

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smile on his face which showed how happy he had become. Melek Shah waited there until they disappeared over the hills. My friends, let them go on their way.

Melek Shah picked enough pomegranate fruits, and with the accompaniment of the lions returned to the tower where his mother and Günan Pehlivan were. While Melek Shah was away, the sultana and Günan Pehlivan discussed what to do if Melek Shah successfully returned. The sultana asked, "What are we going to do if he comes back again? Do you have any more ideas as to how to get rid of him?"

Günan Pehlivan replied, "If nothing happens to him there, and if he returns here, that means he has some kind of magic power which has been protecting him. Without knowing the source of his power and taking it away from him, there is no way of overcoming him."

While they were having this conversation, Melek Shah entered, and upon seeing his mother as healthy as she used to be, Melek Shah was surprised and asked, "How are you, Mother? When I was leaving, you were terribly ill, but it seems now you are well."

The sultana replied, "My son, I was not sick at all."

"Then what was the problem?" Melek Shah asked.

The sultana replied, "I was testing you, my son. I was testing to see if you loved me as much as you love Güllühan. That is why I asked you to bring those things from those places."

Melek Shah said, "Mother, I have been in very dangerous places. What would have happened to you if I had died?"

"I was sure about your strength, but not about your love for me. Therefore I did not worry about sending you to those dangerous places," the sultana said.

Günan Pehlivan participated in their conversation, and said, "You are certainly a brave young man. If you allow me, I would like to test your strength by tying you with a chain and seeing if you can break it."

Melek Shah said, "Let me try. Bring a chain."

Günan Pehlivan rushed into one of his rooms, and returned with a very long chain. He tied Melek Shah from top to bottom with the chain. Then Melek Shah stretched his

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arms and forced the chain, which got broken into pieces. Some pieces of the chain were even nailed into the walls of the room like bullets.

The sultana asked, "My son, I wonder about the source of this power of yours. Would you like to tell me where you get such strength? God, of course, has provided some kind of strength to everyone, but not this much."

Melek Shah replied, "The source of my strength is the three gray hairs in the hair on my forehead²¹." Being supplied with the information they needed, the sultana and Günan Pehlivan did not ask any more questions, and they went to their rooms to sleep.

At midnight, the sultana quietly entered Melek Shah's room, and while Melek Shah was asleep, she pulled out those three magic hairs. The next day, they began talking about Melek Shah's strength once again. The sultana said, "I have heard that while many strong men could have been able to break a chain, it is said that they have trouble in breaking a strong rope. I was wondering if my son can break a strong rope. Can you, Melek Shah?"

Melek Shah replied, "If you would like to see, I can test a rope, as well." Trusting his mother and Günan Pehlivan, Melek Shah let them tie him up with a strong rope. When he forced the rope, he failed to break it.

Having seen Melek Shah's failure to break the rope, the sultana said to Günan Pehlivan, "Be quick and behead him. Then we can have one another without an obstacle between us."

Günan Pehlivan replied, "I cannot do it. Killing such a young man is not the kind of action that I carry out. My conscience does not allow me to perform such an act."

²¹ In Turkish folktales there is a wide range of what may be called life tokens. Talismans and amulets are often much more than simple good-luck charms, for they are integrally related to the physical condition or even the life itself of a human being or other creature. Some life tokens are separable souls hidden in some secret place--a box, the stomach of a deer, the stomach of a fish-- in order to protect the lives of their owners. If you can find the separable soul and destroy it, you thereby kill its owner. Sometimes, on the other hand, the life token must be kept in the possession of its owner. If it is taken away, the owner may lose consciousness or be transformed into some other form. Sometimes a life token is a gauge of a person's condition and is watched closely by its owner's friend or relative in order to keep posted on the welfare of the owner. It may be a gem which changes color if its owner is in serious trouble; it may be a knife which turns rusty for the same reason.

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Having said those words and having cursed her, Günan Pehlivan walked out. While walking out he thought to himself, "Infidel woman! She is going to make me a murderer. Is that what I want to be? You brutal mother! Would you be happy if it were you to be killed?"

Melek Shah cried and begged his mother there. He sang a song and asked her to untie him. Let us hear what he said. Let him sing; let him sing. Let Melek Shah sing the best one. With tears and cries poor Melek Shah sang these words:

I am like a young tree just begun growing.
 Why would you kill me, my heartless mother?
 Your sinful soul has been deceiving you.
 Why would you kill me, my heartless mother?

The brutal sultana paid no attention to Melek Shah's words. She did not feel pity for her own son. Noticing her unwillingness to give up her brutal ideas, Melek Shah sang again:

You burst into tears when you said, "My son!"
 You were saying, "My son, please listen to me."
 You have sent me to dangerous gardens.
 Why would you kill me, my heartless mother?
 You sent me for the pomegranates, for apples;
 Why would you kill me, my heartless mother?

How can you bear to hear my cries?
 Do not keep me from my beloved.
 Melek Shah also cries for Güllühan.
 Why would you kill me, my heartless mother?
 Melek Shah also cries for Güllühan.
 Why would you kill me, my heartless mother?

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It was useless to appeal to the sultana, who did not change her mind. She took a knife and with an order from her monster soul, poked out Melek Shah's eyes. I cannot tell it to you, my friends. How can anyone tell you about such brutality of a mother? I cannot stand her for her deeds. Can you bear it, my friends? She poked out her own son's eyes, and then she went to Günan Pehlivan's room, where she lay down in his arms and said, "Now we have our freedom."

That night, Günan Pehlivan mounted Melek Shah on a mule and took him away from his tower. At a distance of two hours from his tower there was a dry well. Günan Pehlivan threw Melek Shah into the well and then returned to his tower. While all these events were taking place, the lions of Melek Shah had gone hunting. They used to come in front of the tower every day to see Melek Shah. If they had seen Melek Shah in that situation, God knows what they could have done to Günan Pehlivan and the sultana. The lions could have destroyed the tower and killed the sultana and Günan Pehlivan. The lions could have turned the tower upside down. Apparently their being away from there on that night helped Günan Pehlivan to take Melek Shah very easily to the well.

When the lions returned from hunting in the morning, they waited at the gate to see Melek Shah as they used to, but they could not find Melek Shah on that day. Two more days passed, and still Melek Shah did not appear at the tower. The lions wandered around the tower for awhile, and then they began searching for Melek Shah in the wilderness. When they came to the well, they heard Melek Shah's cries. Upon hearing Melek Shah's cries and being unable to help him, the lions began roaring. Melek Shah heard the lions' roaring and began singing. Let us hear what he sang, what he said in his song. He sang the best one yet. My friends, how can a soul stand such a scene? Let us hear his song:

Amaan, amaan²²!

My heartless mother poked out my eyes.

Let it be a wedding or a holiday for her!

²² Amaan is an expression of despair.

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She made the milk I sucked from her unlawful²³.
 God save me from this place. I am hurt.
 My soul is hurt, and I am burnt; I am burnt.

His sorrow had not diminished, and the lions were still roaring. Melek Shah sang again:

Amaan, amaan!
 How much I loved her, I loved her.
 I used say, "Mother, you are everything for me."
 I deemed her as the best person in the world.
 My God, help me; I am hurt; I am burnt.
 I am burnt; I am burnt; I am burnt.

Anger was added to his grief, and began growing more and more in Melek Shah, and the lions were still roaring at the well. Melek Shah continued his song:

She deeply injured my vulnerable soul;
 She added cold water to my cooked food²⁴;
 Brutal mother, I have lost my young years;
 My God, help me with this; I am injured.

²³ The narrator uses here haram, which is a Moslem concept as oppose to another Moslem concept, helal. That which is helal is that which is permissible according to canonical law. That which is haram is forbidden. There is no obligation or restriction or penalty for doing or taking whatever is helal but there will be a penalty on Judgment Day for doing or taking what is forbidden. To accept something from a donor is helal; to take it or steal it is haram. To do anything morally or religiously improper is haram. Dying or endangered people often declare helal anything they have given to or done for another person, so that No. 2 will not go to Judgment indebted to another (which is haram unless declared helal by the benefactor).

²⁴ This line is actually a proverb indicating "to destroy already prepared plans" or "adding to something already prepared." The actual proverb is "Do not add cold water to already cooked food."

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May you, too, get injured, my mother.

Look at this mother; look carefully at this brutal mother, my friends. Look at her once again, and get a lesson from her dreadful deeds. Following his first song, Melek Shah sang another song:

My tryst with Güllühan is left for judgment day,
 Left for judgment day.
 My father's throne has been left to strangers.
 I am burnt; I am burnt.
 Being left alone, forgotten, causes sorrow.
 I am burnt; I am burnt.
 My God, help me with this; I am burnt.
 I am burnt; I am burnt.

Melek Shah's sorrow did not decrease; hence, he sang again:

My cries and tears will reach the Creator;
 They will reach the Creator.
 My mother must be enjoying her achievement;
 She must be enjoying her achievement.
 My lions have also been left alone and roaring;
 My lions have been roaring.
 My God, help me with this; I am burnt.
 My God, save me; save me; help me with this.
 I am burnt; I am burnt; I am burnt.

There was a caravan road near the well. On that day, a caravan happened to be passing by. When the caravan came really close to the well, the merchants and the servants in the caravan heard the lions' roaring. The chief merchant said, "Stop. Stop my friends! There must be a dry well around here. There must be something in that well

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that is causing the lions to roar. The lions' roaring is coming from the well side." The chief merchant was a wrestler-warrior type of a man. He began searching around and walking to the well, where he saw two roaring lions. Even with the danger of the wild beasts, the merchant did not hesitate to go farther and get closer to the well. When the lions saw the approaching merchant, they bowed their heads as if they were telling the merchant that they had understood his good intentions, and hence decided to let him get closer. Upon noticing the lions had no intention of attacking him, but rather they looked as if they wanted to provide some kind of information, the merchant was convinced that there was something in the well. With those thoughts, the merchant went to the entrance of the well and shouted from there, "Hey, is there anybody there? Are you a jinn or a human being²⁵? What are you, and who are you? Tell me something."

Melek Shah shouted, "Help me! Help me! Save me from here!"

The merchant took him out of the well and asked how Melek Shah came to be there. Melek Shah told him about his identity and all the events he had gone through so far. The merchant helped him to walk to the caravan. He was the chief merchant of the shah of India. The merchant took Melek Shah from there to India.

When they arrived at the shah of India's city, the merchant left Melek Shah at the outskirts of the city. But before leaving him there, he had said, "I will try to return very quickly here and help you. Do not leave this place. I have some important things to do now, but when I get here, I will take you and adopt as my brother." Let him take care of his business.

Of whom should I inform you now? I would like to inform you about Çeşm-i Naz, the daughter of India's shah. Çeşm-i Naz was rescued by Melek Shah, and was sent to India with a man. She had arrived in her country a few days ago. Her family was very happy about the reunion. By the time Melek Shah was left at the outskirts of the city, Çeşm-i Naz happened to take a tour around her father's city. Eventually, she came to the

²⁵ If a person appears suddenly in an unlikely place, the viewer quite understandably becomes wary of the true nature of the intruder. The formulaic query in Turkish is in misin, cin misin?-- are you a jinn or other supernatural being? In some early interpretations of the word in it seems to have meant human being, and so the response then is "I am human and not a jinn."

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place where Melek Shah was sitting. When she saw a blind young man sitting under a tree, she felt pity for him and decided to help him. She approached very close to Melek Shah, and looked at his face carefully. Çeşm-i Naz thought that she recognized this face from somewhere, but she could not be sure. She took out a handful of gold coins from her pocket and handed them to the young man, but the young man refused to take coins, and said, "I need no money."

Çeşm-i Naz asked, "Well, if you do not need money, why are you waiting under this tree?"

Melek Shah replied, "I just came to this city, and I have nobody here."

Çeşm-i Naz was trying very hard to recognize this face, but she could not remember where she had met him and from what place she knew this young man. She felt really sorry for the young man, and said, "Hey, you brave man! How would you like to come with me?"

Melek Shah asked, "Where will we go?"

Çeşm-i Naz replied, "To the palace. I will take you to the palace, where I would like to provide you with a room which you will share with the chief cook of the palace. There you can eat, sleep, and pray for me."

As she talked, Melek Shah recognized her voice. Meanwhile she continued, "The cook is a very good man. I am sure he would take care of your daily needs very well."

Melek Shah was certain that he recognized her, and agreed to go with her. "Since you are insisting on taking me to your palace, I will go with you."

Çeşm-i Naz took Melek Shah from there to the palace, where she left him with the cook, with an order, "Dear chief cook, take good care of this man. He looks like a noble man, but some unfortunate things must have happened to him." Having said this, she left them alone.

Melek Shah and the chief cook stayed together and began chatting. The cook asked, "My son, what is your name?"

"Are you asking my name?"

"Yes."

"My name is Melek Shah."

"But this name is like those of kings. How did you get such a name?"

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Melek Shah replied, "Is there something strange about my name? Why should it be a name used only by kings and their families? Are they not human beings like us? All of us are human, are we not?"

The cook said, " Yes, you are right, my son. It seems to me you have enough experience and intelligence. Tell me your story; tell me what you have gone through. Where did you come from, and how did you come here? You look like not an ordinary man, but of some noble inheritance. Are you sure you are not hiding some secret from me?" Upon the cook's questions and insisting on more information about him, Melek Shah told him the truth: who he was, where he was coming from, and what he had experienced. He told all the events he had gone through. As he was telling more and more, the cook's eyes filled with tears. Sorrow and anger were mixed in his heart.

After a few more days had passed, and while the cook and Melek Shah were chatting, Melek Shah said, "Hey, chief cook, tell me."

"What should I tell you?" the cook asked.

Melek Shah said, "Your hükümdar must be a coward and a frightened hükümdar that he could not rescue his daughter from the forty robbers."

Melek Shah's words about the shah of India angered the cook, who said, " If he could not have saved his daughter, then who saved her? Are you the one who rescued her? Since you are getting free food and a place to stay from the shah, it is not nice for you to talk about our shah like this."

Melek Shah replied, "It would not be a lie if I say that I rescued your shah's daughter from the forty robbers. But, unfortunately, I have now become a blind man." The cook did not say anything more, but he thought to himself that Melek Shah had not only become blind, but he had also become mad or crazy.

One day, the cook found an opportunity to talk with Çeşm-i Naz in private. He told her everything that Melek Shah had told him. Hearing this, Çeşm-i Naz became very excited, and she said, "I recognized him a little but I had not been sure about him. Now I am sure that he is the man who rescued me." Then she rushed to the room where Melek Shah was. There, she first stared at Melek Shah's face and examined his appearance very carefully, and became sure that he was indeed the man who had rescued her. Having discovered her liberator, she became very happy, and said to the

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cook, "Yes, he is the man who rescued me." She wanted to share her happiness with her father, and therefore she walked to the shah's court, where she said, "Father, the man who rescued me is here." The shah and Çeşm-i Naz went to the kitchen together. There the shah hugged Melek Shah as if he were hugging his own son. Then the shah ordered his servants to prepare a special room for Melek Shah. The room was prepared, and then Melek Shah was taken there as a special guest of the shah.

Çeşm-i Naz had fallen in love with her liberator, Melek Shah, and therefore she did not leave him alone even for a moment. She was thinking this: "I would like to get married to him. It does not matter for me whether he is blind or not. I will hug him and serve him as much as I can."

One day, Çeşm-i Naz took Melek Shah to the best garden of the palace. Following a short tour in the garden, they stopped for a rest. While they were sitting, Çeşm-i Naz said, "After all these events, I am thinking I will not marry anyone except you. Let us go and tell my father that he should make arrangements for our marriage ceremony."

Melek Shah did not reply to her for awhile, but shook his head as if saying, "No, no." Then he began talking. "I wish I could have been ready for that kind of an arrangement, but it is impossible for me to do it. I must tell you that this is not my own decision, but God's. I cannot have anyone but Güllühan. If I should establish such a relationship with someone else, I am afraid that God would give me the heaviest punishment of all. It is because in reality we are in love with God.²⁶ That is Fate. We have fallen in love with one another by God's inspiration."

Çeşm-i Naz begged, "I believe in your words and in your love, and I respect your ideas, but at least kiss me once."

²⁶ Here the narrator uses the term "Hakk aşığı," which means One who is in love with God. According to the Turkish minstrel tradition, the minstrels are classified in accordance with their knowledge, experiences, skills, and so forth. One of those classified groups claims that the love, and hence the minstrelsy, was inspired in their hearts in a dream they might have had by God. Experiencing a dream about their beloved one, and drinking the potion of love which was offered by a holy figure in the dream, eventually causes or provides the ability of composing songs and singing songs, and playing an instrument, usually a saz, to the person who experienced the dream. Those singing poets who are also the tellers of the romances, either their own or related to some other minstrels, call themselves "Hakk aşığı."

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Melek Shah replied, "That is also impossible. I am afraid I cannot do that, either. I cannot kiss you. I, however, love you dearly as my sister."

Çeşm-i Naz asked, "What if Güllühan were here in my place? Would you have kissed her?"

Melek Shah answered, "Aah, aah! Will God let me live that long?"

Çeşm-i Naz insisted, "I appreciate your being faithful to your love, Melek Shah. She must be a very fortunate girl with whom you are in love. How would it be if you put me in her place, and kissed me as if you were kissing Güllühan?"

Upon this new proposal of Çeşm-i Naz, Melek Shah thought for awhile, and then he hugged Çeşm-i Naz and said, "Aah, my Güllühan!" They kissed each other until Melek Shah lost consciousness.

The next day, Çeşm-i Naz took Melek Shah to the garden again. After a short walk, they sat under a tree, where Melek Shah began narrating the events he had lived. Their conversation turned to different topics, and they began talking about the kiss they had experienced the day before. Melek Shah warned her, "I kissed you in place of my beloved Güllühan; otherwise, I love you as my sister. You must not expect anything more."

Çeşm-i Naz said, "I am satisfied with that, even if you kissed me in place of her, and love me as your sister."

While they were talking, two pigeons landed on a branch of a tree next to them. Melek Shah happened to have the ability of understanding birds' talk. While the pigeons talked, he listened to them carefully. One of the birds said, "Eyvah, eyvah! It is a pity poor Melek Shah has become a blind man. His brutal mother blinded him. I wish he could have understood our talk, and could pick a leaf from the tree we are sitting on and then rub his blinded eyes with that leaf. He could have picked more leaves, and squeezed them until he could have got the juice of those leaves out, and boiled the juice to make a cream with that, and then could have applied that cream on his eyes. If he could have done all these, his eyes could have been cured, by God's permission; he could have regained his sight."

Having heard this talk, Melek Shah said to Çeşm-i Naz, "Look at the tree next to us. Do you see two pigeons sitting on it and singing?"

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Çeşm-i Naz replied, "Yes, I see the pigeons."

Melek Shah said, "Would you please get up and pick a leaf from the branch those pigeons are sitting on, and bring that leaf to me?"

Çeşm-i Naz got up and picked a leaf from the tree and then gave it to Melek Shah. [With Çeşm-i Naz's assistance] Melek Shah went to a fountain in the garden, took a ritual ablution, performed a short prayer, and then rubbed his eyes with the leaf. Following that, he made Çeşm-i Naz pick more leaves for him. Melek Shah took those leaves and pressed them in a cup and got the juice out of them and boiled the juice for awhile. When the juice became creamlike he applied it to his eyes.

[Tape 6 ends here, but the story of Melek Shah and Güllühan continues on Tape 7.]

Melek Shah applied the cream to his eyes and went to bed. Shortly he had fallen asleep. The next morning, thank God, Melek Shah's eyeballs were in their place, and his sight was as good as it used to be. His eyes became like ours.

Melek Shah spent one more week there, and then he said to Çeşm-i Naz, "I must go. Until I return, you should not marry anyone. I love you dearly as my sister."

Çeşm-i Naz bowed her head and said, "All right, I will wait for you."

Remember, my friends, Melek Shah had those experiences because of his brutal, heartless mother. Thank God, however, who helped him.

Melek Shah mounted a horse and rode to the garden where he had rescued Çeşm-i Naz and established a friendship with the lions. The lions were there, and they recognized Melek Shah. They came closer to Melek Shah, and then began circling around him. Melek Shah took the lions with him, and rode to the tower of Günan Pehlivan. Melek Shah broke the main gate and broke the door of the room where his mother and Günan Pehlivan were. Melek Shah did not talk to them at all, but he let his lions attack and kill them. Surely, the lions tore them to pieces. Thank God, Melek Shah took revenge against them. My friends, this is suitable punishment for brutal and unjust people. People who perform all kinds of unjust deeds will eventually receive the kind of punishment that they deserve. Receiving a bitter punishment will be their end.

When Melek Shah had finished his business with Günan Pehlivan and the sultana, he mounted his horse and rode toward Yemen. On his way, Melek Shah encountered a few tents that had been set up in a pasture. These were the tents of a caravan going to

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Yemen. Melek Shah approached the chief merchant's tent and greeted the merchant and his people. Then he asked, "Where are you from, my merchant father?"

The chief merchant replied, "I am from Yemen, and we are going to our homeland."

Melek Shah asked, "Help me, my merchant father. I am in love with your shah's daughter, Güllühan." Then Melek Shah told all his story and the events he had been through.

The chief merchant listened to him with his heart, and said, "I am the chief merchant of the shah of Yemen. I can take you to Yemen, and to the shah's court as well. But you must keep in mind that if he asks you to play your saz and sing, you must not sing about either him or his daughter. If you sing about your love and mention his and his daughter's names, he might kill both of us."

Melek Shah agreed, and hence joined the caravan which departed from there. In a few days, they arrived in Yemen. The shah of Yemen was informed about the arrival of his chief merchant and his wish to see the shah. Soon the merchant received the news that the shah was waiting for him.

The merchant walked to the shah's court, where he bowed his head within seven steps of the shah and then kissed the skirt of the shah's caftan and the shah's hand. Then he waited for the shah's questions and orders. Following their brief talks and asking about each other's health conditions, and also about the goods the merchant had sold and bought, the merchant said, "My shah, on our way back, I met an aşık, and I have brought him here. It seems to me that he is one of the best aşıks. I have not seen such a talented aşık for a long time."

Actually the shah liked aşıks very much, and used to listen to their songs on every occasion. The shah ordered, "Bring him to my court. Let me see what kind of an aşık he is."

The merchant rushed outside where Melek Shah was waiting, and he led Melek Shah to the shah's court. While taking him in, the merchant reminded Melek Shah, "You must follow my signs. If you forget about what I told you about mentioning the names, both of us might be executed by the shah's soldiers."

When they reached the shah's court, the shah asked, "Where are you from, and where are you coming from, my son?"

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Melek Shah replied, "Your majesty, if I tell it with plain words, my tongue might be twisted. If you allow me, and if you would like to listen, I would like to tell you with my saz and in my song."

The shah of Yemen said, "You are permitted, my son. You may tell it to me whatever way you like."

Having been permitted by the shah, Melek Shah began playing his saz and singing a song. Let us hear what he sang. I am sure he sang the best one again:

Hey, my master, great majesty,
My adventure is a bad one; it hurts.
I left my country in search of my beloved;
The only goal I have is to meet her.

The shah liked his song and said, "Great, my son, great! You are singing just fine. Sing more."

Melek Shah continued his song:

I have passed through pastures and mountains;
I have floated like rising rivers;
I have struggled with death to reach her.
My love for Güllühan has been killing me.

When Melek Shah mentioned Güllühan's name, the shah stared at Melek Shah's face and paid more attention to his words. The chief merchant prepared to run away from there.

Melek Shah noticed the merchant's movements and said to him, "Where are you going? You are the one who brought me here. The love inside me was inspired by God, and what I sing is also inspired by God. You should not run away, and you should not leave me alone here. Why are you so afraid of dying? You should not be afraid of what I might sing. These are my feelings, and I have to tell them. I do not care if we are killed because of my words."

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The shah said, "No, no, my son. There will be no killing or murdering anyone. You just continue your song."

Melek Shah sang again:

If I suddenly remember my beloved,
Even mountains cannot bear my cries;
They say, "Do not mention her name; just sing."
I have become like Mecnun²⁷ in these lands.

Melek Shah explains all, though his life is in danger.
There should be no secret; all must be revealed.
I love Güllühan as dearly as my sight;
I love Güllühan more than my life.

Upon hearing Melek Shah's song, the shah thought to himself, "This young man must be my daughter's lover whom she saw in her dream." Then he ordered his servants to put a curtain in the middle of his court so that the court would be divided into two sides, and then he summoned all the maids, the servants, his wife, and Güllühan to his court. At the shah's order, the female group sat behind the curtain. There was going to be a test for Melek Shah and Güllühan to determine whether without seeing one another they could describe each other in their songs.

The shah made this decision: without seeing if Melek Shah and Güllühan could describe and recognize each other, he could have given permission for them to marry. If

²⁷ Mecnun is the protagonist of the classical Persian story of "Leila and Majnun" written by the 12th-century Persian poet Nizami. Probably the most important full text in Turkish (1535) was composed by Fuzuli (1504?--1556). It has been rendered into excellent English by Sofi Huri and published in London in 1970 by Allen and Unwin. The name of the hero, Majnun, has become a motif for the suffering lover in the Islamic world. The word Majnun also indicates one who has lost his mind and has become mad.

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they failed to recognize each other, then he could keep it secret, and let Melek Shah go away from his land.

When all the women in the palace came and sat down here and there behind the curtain, the shah said, "My son, sing for all of us." Let us hear what Melek Shah sang:

Amaan, amaan! ||

Let me see a bit of your rosy face.

I cannot bear a feigned reluctance.

Even the earth cannot bear what I have endured.

I have been afire with your love, O beauty.

Even the earth cannot bear what I have endured.

I have been afire with your love, O beauty.

The Forties showed you to me in my dream,

And made me a slave for you since that time.

When I thought of my beloved, the reluctant,

I have cried and passed through several trials.

When I thought about my beloved, the reluctant one,

I cried and passed through several trials.

Melek Shah has turned rose-colored with your love.

My cries have reached the sky.

May God grant me to have you;

May God unite us one day.

May God grant me to have you;

May God unite us one day.

With those lines Melek Shah finished his song. Güllühan listened to his song behind the curtain. She was eager to answer Melek Shah, but somehow a doubt arose in her heart and in her mind about the identity of this singer who could have been someone

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else and could have introduced himself as Melek Shah. Hence, she did not respond to Melek Shah's song.

Having no response from Güllühan, Melek Shah began singing again. Let us hear what he sang:

The beautiful ones are on promenade today.
She has combed and put at one side her hair.
Güllühan cheers up the people around her.
Some of the beauties have bouquets of roses.
Falling in love with her has made me burnt.

I searched for Güllühan among them.
My only aim is to see her face.
My life has turned into a hell,
Even though I have not seen her.

Hey, Güllühan! Have mercy on me.
How much longer must I yearn?
Let us try to live in happiness.
It is time for us to meet; it is time.

Put away your doubts; have mercy on me.
I am not unfaithful; have mercy on me.
Let it be a black crown of happiness I wear.
Sorrow caused by love is unlike any illness.

Having listened to Melek Shah's second song, there was no doubt left in Güllühan's mind. She was sure that this singer was the right person, and he was Melek Shah, the lover of Güllühan. She could not wait behind the curtain anymore, and she ran to Melek Shah with affectionate words, "My two eyes, my lover, my Melek Shah."

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Let us hear what Güllühan said to Melek Shah there. My ağas, a heart cannot bear the weight of the passion of love. Güllühan sang this song:

Welcome, welcome, my lover, Melek Shah.
I have waited for your arrival, for your arrival.
If I have made any mistake, may God forgive me.
Open your arms and embrace me now.

Thank God, we are finally united.
I believe, I believe it is you.
Güllühan swears she has no doubts about you.
We have faith and believe in God.

When their exchange of songs was over, the shah ordered his servants to take the curtain away since Melek Shah and Güllühan had passed the test; they had recognized each other. While Melek Shah and Güllühan were hugging each other, the shah promised that he was going to prepare for their wedding ceremony within a week.

While the preparations for the wedding were in progress, the shah had an illness and suddenly died. Güllühan's brothers became the rulers of their country. As members of the family, Güllühan's brothers refused to give their sister's hand in marriage to Melek Shah. Furthermore, they took Güllühan from their city to the palace of a rural bey named Karahan. They promised Karahan to marry their sister to him. Karahan was a very intelligent person who thought to himself, "Why do they want their sister to marry me? There must be some strange involvement in this." When Güllühan's brothers came to his palace, Karahan put them in detention.

Meanwhile, Melek Shah was informed about the deeds of Güllühan's brothers. Melek Shah mounted his horse and rode to Karahan's palace. There he showed great respect to Karahan, and then begged that Karahan give him Güllühan. With the information supplied by Melek Shah, it became clearer to Karahan, who had also heard that Güllühan's father had promised Melek Shah Güllühan's hand in marriage, and that when he had died, Güllühan's brothers had refused to fulfill the promise of their father.

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Karahan let Melek Shah and Güllühan reunite and said, "This is an order of God. Justice must be performed. Therefore I will let you have each other." He let them go. Following that, Karahan also released Güllühan's brothers, and before letting them depart from his palace, he said, "Your sister has long been in love with Melek Shah. She loves him more than anything else in this world. You must approve and allow them to marry, and you must also help them in their wedding ceremony."

Melek Shah and Güllühan mounted their horses and rode toward Melek Shah's country. On their way back, they stopped briefly at Günan Pehlivan's tower, where Melek Shah had left his lions. They rested for awhile and then, taking the lions with them, they rode again.

One day they stopped at a fountain on their way back. While resting, they noticed an approaching cloud of dust caused by fast-running horses mounted by soldiers. Those were Güllühan's brothers and the soldiers gathered by them. They wanted to take Güllühan back. When the small army came very close to Melek Shah and Güllühan, Melek Shah ordered his lions to attack the soldiers. Surely, the lions destroyed the army, and only those who fled from there saved their lives. While most of the soldiers tried to run away, Güllühan's little brother surrendered himself to Melek Shah. Melek Shah decided to take him with them to his country.

They mounted their horses, and soon they arrived in the city of Çeşm-i Naz. There Melek Shah asked Çeşm-i Naz to go with them, and he also informed her that he was going to marry her to Güllühan's little brother. Çeşm-i Naz joined the group, and they finally reached Melek Shah's country.

There Melek Shah first got his throne back from the old vizier, and then arranged a marriage ceremony for his own wedding and for that of Güllühan's little brother. Shortly they married. One Friday night, Melek Shah and Güllühan had their desires fulfilled. On the next Friday, Çeşm-i Naz and Güllühan's little brother had their desires fulfilled. All of them achieved their desires, and each couple was happily married. May God help all of us to reach our goals. Hey, my ağas! Our story is finished here.

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The name of our master is Hıdır²⁸.
This is the best I can do.
May all be very sweet that you eat;
May it be fur that you wear;
May God grant long life for each of us.

²⁸ This word might be "Hızır" or "Hıdır." The minstrels and other narrators in Turkey mention the name of this holy person in different parts of a story. At the end of each story, the name Hızır/Hıdır is mentioned as a rhyming word as well.