

Story 1058 (1972 Tape 8)

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The Padişah's Three Sons and theGiant in the Garden

48-50

Brother three

There were once a padişah and his wife who had three

Brother older,

sons. These boys lived happily with their parents, but

*headless*the family had a special problem. In their garden there
was an apple tree, and on that tree grew delicious apples.*Don three*

For some time, however, the family had not tasted any apples

*Brother, youngest
Successful*from that tree, because as soon as they were ripe, they
were stolen at night by a giant. The three sons announced
to their father, "Father, we shall kill that giant."*ALL*First the oldest son attempted to kill the giant, but
he failed to accomplish this task. Then the middle son
tried to kill the giant, but he too failed. Finally it
was the turn of the youngest son to try.¹ As the boy waswatching in the garden, the giant came and began to eat
apples. The youngest son attacked the giant, and wound-
ed it, but the giant then fled and escaped to its den, which
in a dry well.

¹There is considerable shortening of the narrative here. In fact, this is more a summary than an actual account of what happened. Usually the attempts and failures of the two older brothers are given in detail.

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The youngest son then returned home to get his two older brothers to help him kill the giant in the dry well. When the three of them got there, the oldest said, "Let me go down into the well first. I shall shoot the giant and then come back up." They started lowering him into the well, but before he had gone very far down, he began shouting, "Pull me up! It is too hot down here!"

After the oldest brother had been pulled up again, the middle brother said, "Let me go down." The same thing happened to him, and he yelled, "Pull me up! It's too hot down here!" Therefore he was pulled up also without having encountered the giant.

Finally the youngest brother said, "Let me go down. Even if I should shout, 'I am burning!' just let out more rope. If you do this, I shall find the giant and kill it. Taking his sword, he descended into the well. When he reached the bottom of the well, he found three captive girls who were taking turns swatting flies that were pestering the giant."

Seeing the young man, one of the girls whispered to him, "When the giant's eyes are open, he is asleep. When they are closed he is awake."

Waiting until the giant's eyes were open, the youngest

At bottom

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son killed the monster with his sword. He then called up to his brothers that he wanted to have the three girls and himself pulled out of the well. When the first girl was pulled up, he said, "This girl is for my older brother. When the second girl was pulled up, he said, "This girl is for my middle brother." Then as the third one was pulled out, he said, "This girl is for me."² But when it was the turn of the youngest son to be pulled out, his older brothers cut the rope and left him in the well.

Before the third girl had ascended she had given the youngest son two magic hairs and instructed him to rub them together if he needed help. Left alone in the well, he rubbed these hairs together and in his confusion he said to the jinn who appeared, "Take me to the world of darkness." He had meant to say, "Take me to the world of light."

After being carried down farther, into the world of darkness, he came to a place where three poplar trees grew in a cluster. There he lay down in the shade to rest. In the trees above him was the nest of an anka

²Omitted from this variant is the warning given by the third girl about the treachery premeditated by his jealous older brothers. The narrator does remember, belatedly, to have the third girl give the hero two magic objects to aid him.

older brothers
treachery

the jinn

Underworld
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bird³ containing two eggs. That anka bird had been laying eggs every year for a long, long time, but none of them ever hatched because they had always been eaten first by a dragon. After the young man had been lying there for a while, he was awakened by a very loud noise. It was the sound of the dragon's climbing the tree to eat the anka eggs. Seeing what the dragon was about to do, the young man shot that creature and then went back to sleep again.

When the mother anka returned and saw what had happened, she spread her great wings over the sleeping young man to give him even more shade. After the youngest son finally awakened, the anka said, "You may wish whatever you want from me."

He said, "I wish only for your good health

The bird said, "You cannot benefit in any way from my good health. Wish for something for yourself.

"Very well, then. I wish that you would take me above to the world of light."⁴

The bird answered, "I shall carry you up to the world

³One of the giant birds (along with the simurgh, the phoenix, and the roc or rukh) that appear in lore and legend of the Middle East.

⁴When asked what he wishes as reward for some service rendered, the hero usually demurs either two or three times with wishes for his benefactor's good health.

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of light if you will get me forty cups of water and forty pieces of meat for the trip

The young man went to the padişah of that land of darkness and requested forty cups of water and forty pieces of meat.⁵ After receiving these provisions from the padişah, he took them back and loaded them on the anka's back. Seating himself just behind the bird's wings, he then began a long journey upward. When the bird wanted meat, it said, "Hak!" and the boy gave it a piece of meat. When it was thirsty, it said, "Huk!" and the boy gave it a cupful of water

When the last piece of meat had been fed to the bird, they were still a short distance from the surface of the earth. The boy thought to himself, "What will I do now? There is no more meat. O my God, help me!" He then cut a piece of meat from his own hip and fed it to the bird. Shortly after that they arrived in the world of light.

When they got there, the bird said, "Now you will have to walk." The boy did start to walk away but he limped

⁵A major episode has been omitted from this well-known and very widely distributed folktale type. Why should the padişah provide a total stranger with meat and water in considerable quantity? The hero has usually killed a giant, and in doing so, he has saved the life of the princess and brought unlimited water to the land. This omission is obviously very damaging to the narrative structure of the tale.

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badly as a result of having cut a piece out of his hip to feed the bird. "Why are you limping so?"

The boy said, "Oh, it is nothing! I am not really limping. I just have a slight pain in my leg."

But the bird understood what was the matter. It had detected at once that the last piece of meat it had been fed was human flesh. The bird had not eaten that flesh, and it now took it from its mouth, placed it on the boy's hip, and licked it. The wounded hip was healed immediately.

The first thing that the youngest son did after returning to the world of light was to cover his head with skin in order to make himself look like a keloğlan.⁶ He was soon accepted in the household of an old woman, and he lived there quietly. He was thinking all of the time, however, about what he wanted to do. He wanted to marry the third and youngest girl taken from the well, and he wanted also to take vengeance against his brothers for

⁶Keloğlan means literally bald boy, but the baldness is caused by ringworm infestation of the scalp rather than by aging. This disease often affects the younger and poorly attended children of large peasant families; its spread is abetted by uncleanness. In folktales the most popular disguise for a person who wishes to remain incognito is to assume the appearance of a keloğlan. This is usually done by turning a sheepskin inside out and covering the head with it, or cleaning out a sheep's stomach and stretching that over the head. --The inept narrator here gives no hint of where the youngest son got the skin to cover his head.

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their treachery. Without being detected, he watched his two brothers continually. After a while he heard the news that the padişah's two sons were to be married to the three girls rescued from the well

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The padişah ordered that all of the jewelers⁷ were to produce a golden rabbit and a silver greyhound that seemed to be alive. The silver greyhound was to chase the golden rabbit around on a golden tray. "Unless one of you produces such a toy, I shall have you all executed," he announced.⁸

When Keloğlan heard this announcement of the padişah made by towncriers, he thought, "Perhaps I can make that toy that the padişah has ordered." He talked to various

⁷The narrator refers here and later to the craftsmen as blacksmiths and iron workers. These craftsmen are obviously not equipped to do the work of goldsmiths and silversmiths. We have, therefore, referred to them simply as jewelers.

⁸The narrator has again omitted a structurally important part of the tale. The youngest girl cannot refuse to marry one of the older brothers, but like Penelope and many other women wooed by unwanted lovers, she can stall. The girl in this tale type agrees to marry the dastardly prince if she is first given gifts A, B, and C--all of them impossibly difficult to create. When one or more of these gifts are provided for her, she knows that her true love is alive and nearby, for only by means of the magic hairs (or other magic objects she had earlier given to the hero) could such gifts be created.

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jewelers about the construction of this toy. They all said, "We cannot make such lifelike objects. It is impossible!"

Keloğlan said, "I can do it," but most of the jewelers refused to believe him. "Believe me," he said. "I can do that, but I will have to be given sufficient provisions. I shall need a sack of walnuts, a sack of hazelnuts, a hammer, and forty days' time. I must stay in a room alone to accomplish this task. On the thirty-ninth day open the door of that room and you will see a golden rabbit run out of it pursued by a silver greyhound." One of the jewelers accepted his proposal, and when the jeweler opened the door of the Keloğlan's room on the thirty-ninth day, he was delighted to see the golden rabbit run out followed by the silver greyhound.⁹

When the youngest girl heard the news that the golden rabbit and the silver greyhound had been made, she was pleased. She knew from this that the youngest son of the padişah must have returned to the world of light. No one

⁹ Nothing whatever is said by the incompetent narrator about how the youngest son proceeded. He sleeps for thirty-nine days and consumes the two sacks of nuts. He provides the gold and silver automata by rubbing together the magic hairs and having the objects created by supernatural means. --The narrator is either stupid or has failed to assimilate the tale he is here trying to tell.

but the youngest son could have made the lifelike rabbit and greyhound. She knew that it must have been done with the help of the magic hairs.

The wedding ceremony began the next day. There were to be horsemanship games in the riding field on the first day. The old woman in whose home the youngest son lived said, "Keloğlan, go and watch the games that will be played today as part of the wedding celebration."

"No, I shall not go. What would a keloğlan do there?" But after the old woman had left, Keloğlan rubbed the hairs together and ordered a good horse and a very expensive set of clothes for himself. After dressing in the new clothes and mounting the horse, he rode to the field where the games were being played. He saw there that his older brother was playing cirit.¹⁰ He was very angry at his brother, and so he decided to enter the cirit game and encounter his brother. During the contest that followed, he struck his older brother in the forehead with a javelin and killed him. The youngest then rubbed the magic hairs together again and disap-

¹⁰Cirit (pronounced jirit) is an ancient Turkish game that is still played in some Turkish areas of the Turkic-speaking world. It is somewhat similar to the jousting of medieval knights in Europe, except that the weapons are always thrown, not held. When the game is played in Turkey today, padded-tip or blunt-ended sticks are always used instead of deadly javelins.

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peared. He returned to the home of the old woman.

When the youngest girl heard the news of the death of the oldest son of the padişah, she understood everything. She decided to leave the palace and find her fiancé, wherever he was. After searching for him for some time, she found him at the old woman's house. The two were then married and lived very happily after that.¹¹

¹¹The narrator has omitted the standard ending for this tale type. In that traditional ending there are two gifts demanded by the girl--the first when the oldest brother wishes to marry her and the second when the middle brother wishes to marry her. In successive cirit games both older brothers are killed. The hero then identifies himself and is reunited with his father. He eventually succeeds his father as padişah. --The ending of the present variant is neither logical nor satisfactory.