

Story #671 (1976, Tape #20)

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Location: Village of Yukarıgökü, kaza of Hâlfeti, Province of Urfa

Date: May 7, 1976

The Trials of the Padişah's Youngest Daughter

Once there was and once there was not a padişah who had three daughters.

They were at a ripe age, but the padişah had done nothing to arrange to wed his daughters. One day the oldest daughter gathered her sisters, and they had a conference. After the conference, they went to the market and bought three watermelons. One was over-ripe and not very suitable for eating. The second was over-ripe on one side but just right on the other. The third watermelon was just right all over for eating. They placed the three watermelons on a large copper tray and covered them with an embroidered head scarf. Then they had one of the servants deliver the lot to their father, who was in session with his council.\*

When the padişah saw the tray of watermelons sent by his daughters, he quickly realized that they could not ask him to have them married, but had chosen this symbol to let him know it was time he arranged to have them settled.

The padişah ordered three golden balls from the goldsmith and he had a crier announce that all were invited to attend his daughters' selection of husbands, where the girls would throw golden balls to whomever they chose to marry.

The whole town, and many people from elsewhere in the land came to participate and assist in the groom selection ceremony. The oldest

\* This is another instance of the kind of symbolic language used frequently in Turkish life and folklore of pre-Republican days. See comments on this subject in the Constantinople diaries of Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

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*Sister -- middle*  
*daughter -- middle*  
and middle daughters threw their golden balls to the viziers on the right and left of the padishah, but the youngest daughter did not throw her golden ball to anyone. Her father came to her side and asked, "Why have you not chosen your groom? Have you not found any-one you like?"

The youngest daughter answered her father, "The groom I want has suddenly disappeared, but he has left his horse in the meadow next to the palace."

The padishah ordered his servants to have the horse taken to the stable, and he asked the candidates to pass in front of the palace once again, on foot. All the young men marched in front of the palace again, and then a second and third time, but the youngest daughter shook her head sadly. After that she went to the stables. As she was petting the horse, he suddenly spoke to her. "You must hide me and not breathe a word about me for *Friday -- three* three Fridays.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, you will have to wear out a pair of shoes before you could find him." *Shoe -- wedding out -- on guest*

On the first Friday the oldest daughter held her wedding, and there was merriment everywhere. The sisters had to drag the youngest daughter away from the stables. The celebration was elaborate and extensive, as was customary in those days. There were cirit<sup>2</sup> contests and horse races. A young man who seemed to appear from the clouds came and won at all the events. The youngest daughter recognized her

<sup>1</sup> Friday is the Moslem sabbath, and this was true in Turkey until after the founding of the Republic. Thus, counting Fridays was a convenient way of noting the passage of weeks.

<sup>2</sup> A type of jousting in which the two contestants threw spears or javelins at each other.

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young man, but the padisah's men could not capture him. He fought off the guards and disappeared. The older sisters tried to convince the youngest that such a man really could not exist, that he was too good to be true, but the youngest daughter knew better, and she went back to the stable with the horse. The horse repeated its warning to her.

On the second Friday the second daughter had her wedding. The whole region came to the celebration. Again a young man appeared as the clouds and was the victor at every contest, and once more succeeded in eluding the padisah's men. The youngest daughter of the padisah burst out crying. Pressed to the extreme by her sisters, she finally told them what had happened. Then she went back to the stable and cried and cried, stroking the horse's mane.

next day the horse disappeared too. The girl sat crying in stable, when a bird settled on her shoulder, and said, "Did not tell you to keep my secret for three weeks? Now you will have

to look for me until you wear a hole in your slipper and wear out an iron walking stick before you can find me." *Jaboo: revealing identity of lover before three Fridays have passed.*

The youngest daughter wiped her tears, went to her father, and told him she was going to search for her groom. She asked for a pair of slippers and walking stick. Taking a loaf of bread with her, she set out to search for her future husband. She walked over valleys and mountains and finally came to a hot water spring gushing from a copper well house. At the edge sat a girl with a copper goblet. She asked the girl to give her some refreshment from the spring in the name of her lover. The girl with the copper goblet told her she did not know her lover but that she would give her some water from the

*Daughter -- youngest -- succumbed to pressure of sisters and broke taboo (revealing it of love).*

*Bird -- repeats to heroine the cruelty for revealing secret of lover's identity*

*Daughter -- for breaking taboo -- traveling until shoes and iron walking stick worn out*

*Daughter -- youngest -- travels in search of her future husband*

*Spring -- hot water*

*well-house -- copper*

*goblet -- copper*



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spring anyway. After she had rested, eaten some of her bread, and drunk her water, she continued on her way.

She walked and walked, passing towns, and finally came to a <sup>fortress -- silver</sup> silver fortress. At the edge of a well sat a girl with a silver gob- <sup>goblet -- silver</sup> let. The youngest daughter asked her for some refreshment in the name of her lover. The girl with the silver goblet told her she did not know her lover but that she would be happy to give her some refreshment. The youngest daughter rested at the silver fortress, ate a bit of bread, drank some water, and continued on her way.

She crossed rivers, climbed mountains, walked through valleys, and finally came to a <sup>fortress -- golden</sup> fortress made of gold. It sparkled with precious <sup>gems</sup> gems.

A girl sat by the <sup>well -- golden</sup> golden well holding a golden goblet. The youngest sister was truly worn out. She glanced at her slipper and saw a hole in the sole; she looked at her staff and saw that it too was worn out. She became hopeful and ran to the girl at the <sup>well</sup> well, saying, "Golden maiden of the golden fortress and golden <sup>goblet -- golden</sup> goblet, will you give me some refreshment in the in the name of Emirilâm"

The girl asked her how she came to know Emirilâm and told her she must run to take her master water to wash with before his <sup>ablution -- before prayers</sup> prayers, but that she could give her a quick drink first. The youngest daughter said she had met Emirilâm in her travels, Quickly taking the goblet to refresh herself, she slipped her ring into it without letting the golden maiden see her do this. The girl left the youngest daughter there and took water to her master in the golden goblet. When he was pouring the water, he found the youngest daughter's ring and slipped it into his pocket. He asked the girl with the golden goblet, "Has any- one come by the well?"

<sup>Ring -- as token of identity -- placed in goblet</sup>

Silver

Gold

Slipper -- worn out  
on long journey  
Staff -- walking -- worn  
out on long journey

The girl said, "There is a girl who looks worn out from traveling. I gave her a drink from the well and left her there."

The young man went to the well as soon as the girl had left him. He found the youngest daughter there. He said to her, "I do not what to do with you. My father and mother are giants, my aunts and uncles are giants, and I am engaged to my cousin." The young man thought and thought about what he could do, and finally he said a few magic words over the girl. When she suddenly became small enough to go

through the eye of a needle, he put her in his pocket. *(Daughter -- youngest -- reduced in size small enough to pass through eye of needle)*

*Giants -- detects presence of* His mother came by and sniffed him. "I smell human flesh on you," *humor by son,* said she. But the boy denied having been around human beings and

told his mother that it was probably the scent of human meat trapped in her teeth from his morning meal in the mountains. His mother insisted that she could smell human flesh on him, but the son swore that ~~he~~ had not been with a human, and so she had to give up her pursuit.

If he could successfully hide the girl for three days, she could be safe from the giants, for they could not touch her on the fourth day.

*Safely -- assured to human being who can remain hidden among giants for three days* ~~This~~ he succeeded in doing. When he brought her out on the fourth day, his mother and the other giants could not touch her.

Meanwhile, the preparations for the boy's wedding were started.

The mother called the girl, gave her a mattress cover, and told her to go up in the mountains and gather downy feathers for the marital bed. The girl took the mattress cover, went to the mountains, sat on a rock, and started crying, for there was no way in which she could possibly gather such a large quantity of downy feathers.

*Jash -- to go to mountains and fill mattress cover with downy feathers*

*Lower -- of youngest daughter -- engaged to his cousin*

*Giants -- detects presence of humor by son,*

*Safely -- assured to human being who can remain hidden among giants for three days*

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The boy suddenly appeared by her side and asked, "Why are you crying?"

She said, "Your mother ordered me to come here and fill this mattress cover with downy feathers, but I shall never find enough."

The boy then realized that his mother was determined to destroy the girl by ~~devious means~~, since she could no longer seize her. He spread his <sup>rug -- for prayer</sup> prayer rug on the ground and prayed to Allah for assistance.

Suddenly the sky was filled with birds which flapped their wings and heaps of feathers into the mattress cover full of feathers in front of the mother's door.

When the mother saw the mattress, she realized that the girl must have had divine help in completing the task she had set for her. In a few days she called the girl again, and this time she told her to bring the song and the word. The girl went out, but she had no idea where to start looking for the song and the word. Isa -- to bring the "song and the word"

She sat on a rock and cried and cried. The boy appeared once again and asked, "Why are you crying?"

She said, "Your mother has asked me to bring the song and the word, but I have no idea where to start looking for the song and the word."

Once again the boy took out the prayer rug, spread it on the ground, and asked for guidance -- divine guidance. When he was through, he said to the girl, "You must walk into the forest until you meet a horse and a dog which are tied. There will be grass in front of the dog, and there will be meat in front of the horse. You are to switch the meat with the grass, placing the meat in front of the dog and the grass in front of the horse.

Then continue into the forest. You will soon come to a wall with a straw

Grass -- before dog -- replaced with meat -- by hero/  
Meat -- before horse -- replaced with grass -- by hero/heroine  
Dog -- given meat and has grass before it removed -- by hero/heroine  
Horse -- given grass -- and has meat before it removed -- by hero/heroine

to Allah  
 is listening

Allah made  
 crescent  
 to provide  
 a horse and a dog

with her coming

vine -- to  
 task



Mat of straw -- on ground -- hung on wall -- by hero/heroine  
Mat -- of straw -- hanging on wall -- removed and placed on <sup>47</sup>ground --  
Story #671 Box -- containing the "song" and the "word" by hero/heroine  
[fiddlers and tambourine players]

Giant -- guards object of quest  
mat hanging on it, and another one lying on the ground. You will  
switch the mats, so that the one that was hanging will lie, and the  
lying one will hang. Then continue straight ahead in the forest. You  
will soon come to a palace where there will be a box that holds the  
song and the word. You will take it and run back without looking be-  
hind you, and under no circumstances are you to open the box."

The girl did just as she had been told. She came to the tied  
horse and dog, and she took the meat from before the horse and placed  
it in front of the dog. She took the grass from before the dog and placed  
it in front of the horse. Then she continued into the forest until she  
reached the wall that had a straw mat hung on it and another one lying  
beneath it on the ground. She switched the mats and continued into the  
forest. Finally, she came to a huge palace, but there was a giant guard  
at the door. When she told the giant that she had come for the song  
and the word, he told her to wait while he went to get it for her.  
Instead of doing that, he went in to file his teeth.

The girl acted quickly. She slipped in, found the box, took it,  
and ran out as fast as she could without looking back. The giant called  
to the mats, "Mats, catch her!"

But they refused to do so, for they had been treated kindly by her.  
One of the mats said, "I had been hanging for years, and she took me  
down and laid me down to rest." And the other mat said, "I was so  
tired of lying down for so many years, and then she came along and hung  
me up. I will not go after her."

The giant then ordered his horse and dog, "Chase that girl and

Mats -- refuse to catch <sup>hero/</sup> ~~heroine~~ who had changed their position and made them  
feel comfortable  
Horse -- refuses to catch hero/heroine who had given it grass instead of meat to eat  
Dog -- refuses to catch hero/heroine who had given it meat instead of grass to eat

Story #671 Takoo: opening box containing the "song" and the 48<sup>th</sup> word.  
Takoo -- against opening box containing "song and 'claw' -- broken.

catch her for me."

But they both refused because she had been kind to them. The horse said, "I had for years been given meat, which I could not eat, but she gave me grass." The dog said, "I had nothing but grass for years until she came along and gave me meat."

Thus the girl escaped from the giant. When she was safely back, however, she wondered what the song and word were and she opened the

Violin players and tambourine players poured out of the box and went their merry way playing their instruments, and she was unable to get them back into the box. She sat down and cried and cried. Emirilâm appeared once again and asked her why she had opened the box. He took out his prayer rug again, and when he was through praying, the musicians one by one went into the box. Then the girl was able to deliver it to his giant mother.

The next day all his relatives took Emirilâm to the bride to whom he had formerly been engaged. While he was in the palace with her, they took the youngest daughter of the padişah out to the court yard, tied her up with ropes to a tree, and started a slow fire at the foot of the tree.

They thought that the boy would be busy all night and that meanwhile the girl would burn on the tree. Death -- by fire -- planned for youngest daughter -- by relatives of her future husband

But Emirilâm smelled smoke, went to investigate, and found the padişah's youngest daughter tied to the tree. He quickly freed her,

and they both flew up in a black cloud of smoke. There was a cucumber

garden -- for raising cucumbers

garden next to the palace, and the ninety-year-old gardener -- aged ninety

girl and young man fly by in the midst of a black cloud. Right behind

them came the giant mother, and she asked, "Have you seen a young girl

Rescue -- of youngest daughter -- from death by fire -- performed by future husband.

Lovers -- escape pursuit -- by flying up into black cloud



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and man pass this way?" The old man pretended to be deaf and talked about his cucumber garden to the giant mother until she became so exasperated that she cursed him and continued her pursuit.

Very soon her giant stride came close behind them. The young man quickly laid down his prayer rug and immediately he and the girl were disguised as huge fish in a pool. The giant mother looked around but could see no one. She grew so furious, screaming and screaming, she finally exploded in her anger. giant -- exploded as result of anger

Emirilâm and the padisha's youngest daughter emerged from the pool, horses -- white mounted the two white horses which were standing by, and returned to her father's land. They were wedded, and everyone feasted for forty day and forty nights. feast -- lasting forty day and forty nights

Collector: "Thank you very much. That was a very good story. When and where did you learn these tales?"

Narrator: "During my childhood I heard these tales from my elders over and over again. Older relatives, the village women--all used to tell tales to children."

Collector: "Do you think there was a moral to this story? What do you think the purpose of the story was?"

Narrator: "I think that the story is about the different types of people that used to live on the earth such as giant. I really do think that long ago there were people who were larger and different from the present inhabitants."]