

Story #26 (Faculty Tape 1, Track 1)

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The Keloğlan and His Wise Brother brother -- wise

There was once a keloğlan who had a wise brother. When their father died, the two brothers had a new stable built, so that they then had two stables. One day the wise brother asked the keloğlan, "How long are we going to live together? Why don't we separate?"

"All right," said the keloğlan, "let us separate."

"But let us do it on one condition," said the wise brother. "I'll take everything in the old stable, and you will take everything in the new one."

"All right, I'll accept that," replied the keloğlan.

When the animals were returning to the stables after being watered, late in the afternoon, all except one lean bullock entered the old stable. When all the animals were in the stables thus, the wise brother said to the keloğlan, "Well, you must be content with what you have gotten."

"But what am I to do with this one poor little bullock?" asked the keloğlan. "I had better take it to market and sell it."

On his way to the market he came to a lake. In this lake there were hundreds of frogs croaking, "Varuk, vuruk!" He imitated the frogs, saying "Varuk, vuruk!" Then he said to the frogs, "Would you like to have the bullock that I have here?"

The frogs answered only, "Varuk, vuruk!"

He took this to mean that they did want the bullock. He cut its throat and then sliced its carcass into small pieces which he threw into the water. "When are you going to pay for it?" he asked.

The frogs answered only, "Varuk, vuruk!"

"Are you going to pay me next week?" he asked.

Simploton -- kills bullock -- and "sells" strips of meat to frogs in lake

"Varuk, vuruk!" the frogs said again.

The keloĝlan returned to his village, and when his wise brother saw him, he asked, "What did you do with your bullock?"

"Well, I was taking it to the market," said the keloĝlan, "but on the way I stopped at a lake where the frogs bought it from me."

"How much did you get for it?" asked the wise brother

"Well, they said, 'Come and get the money next Friday.'"

On Friday the keloĝlan went to the lake. When they saw him, the frogs croaked, "Varuk, vuruk!"

He said, "Shall I come in?"

The frogs said, "Varuk, vuruk!"

Keloĝlan -- discovers bagful of gold in lake

The keloĝlan undressed and went into the lake. While he was wading around in the lake, his foot was caught in a bag. He pulled this bag out of the water and was amazed to see that it was full of gold. ^{- bagful} He returned home with the bag of gold, and when the wise brother saw him, the keloĝlan explained how he had acquired the gold: "When I went to the lake to collect the money for my bullock, the frogs told me to come into the water. When I did this, my foot struck a bag; when I pulled this bag out of the water, it was full of gold. They paid me well for the bullock."

"Let us share this money," suggested the wise brother.

When the keloĝlan agreed to share his gold, the wise brother said to him, "Go to our grandmother's house and ask her to lend us a pair of scales. Don't say that we are going to weigh gold. Say that we are going to weigh beans."

The keloĝlan went to his grandmother's house and asked to borrow her scales. She asked him, "What are you going to weigh?"

"Oh, we are not going to weigh gold," he said. "We are going to weigh beans."

Even dropping -- through chimney

His grandmother became suspicious of the way in which the keloğlan spoke, and she decided to go and listen to their conversation through the chimney stack. When they were division -- of gold the gold division of saying, "This is for you, this is for me, this is for you, this is for me," the keloğlan caught a glimpse of a person looking down through the chimney. He didn't know that it was his grandmother. He went out quietly, picked up a piece of rock, and struck the old woman with it. He hit her so hard that she fell down through the chimney.

When the keloğlan came back into the house, his wise brother said to him, "You God-damned keloğlan, you have killed your grandmother. Let us get away from here before this is discovered." Keloğlan -- kills even dropper -- unaware that it is his grandmother

They divided the rest of the gold hurriedly and then they escaped, the one carrying the blankets and the beds and the other carrying their front door.¹ They walked for a long distance, and finally they reached a wide square where government officials were dividing money among themselves because it was a new year.²

When they saw these government officials, the keloğlan said to his brother, "What shall we do?" Simpleton -- guards front door -- by carrying it with him
Door -- of house -- guarded by simpleton by carrying it with him

¹ A stupid person who guards the front door of a house against thieves by carrying it with him is a common motif in Turkish folk tales. There is no indication here that this is the purpose in their carrying off the front door, but I suspect that the narrator either omitted this explanation or confused this tale with one in which that motif is present. As the story develops, it is revealed that it is the dim-witted keloğlan who is carrying the door.

² This gives a good idea of the peasants' conception of the role of government officials in Turkey. There may actually be some basis for this remark about the new year. Before there was a regular salary scale established for civil servants by the National Assembly, government officials were badly paid. In the late 1950's cognizance was taken of this fact, and pay raises were voted, to become effective over a period of several months in several increments. These increments were often paid on the new year and on religious holidays; with the financial benefits were often such additional benefits as doles of cloth to be used for clothing and household furnishings.

"Let us climb up that poplar tree and watch them from there," said the wise brother.

So they climbed up the poplar tree and started watching the government officials from there. These officials went on dividing money among themselves.

After a short while, the keloğlan said, "Brother, I have to pass water, and I cannot wait." *Keloğlan - urinates from treetop on government officials who think it is a shower*

Keloğlan -- drops door from treetop on government officials -- who think sky is falling and flee
"You God-damned keloğlan," said his brother, "when you pass water, they will discover us here. But perhaps if you sprinkle it evenly, the government officials will think that it is raining."

The keloğlan did as his brother suggested, and the government officials were quite surprised. One of them said, "It is strange that it should rain, for it is such a fine day."

Then another of them said, "Oh, it is just one of those passing showers. This is the right season for them." And so their problem was solved in this way.

Soon after this another difficulty arose. The keloğlan had been holding the door with one hand while he clung to the poplar tree with the other. He said, "My arm is becoming so tired that I can no longer hold this door up here. I am going to let it go."

As the door came rolling down on them, the government officials panicked, crying, "The sky is collapsing on us!" and they left all the money, as well as cloth and rugs and carpets, and they ran away.

After they had gone, the two brothers came down from the tree. The wise brother took all the money left by the government officials. "I'll take the money that they left here," he said, "and you can have all of the rugs and other things." The keloğlan agreed to this arrangement.

Keloğlan -- and wise brother -- divide wealth of government officials whom they have frightened away

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When the night came, the wise brother wrapped himself in money and fell asleep. The keloĝlan wrapped himself in carpets and rugs. The next morning when the keloĝlan got up, he discovered that his wise brother had frozen to death during the night. He had been such a fool to go to sleep wrapped in money! Taking all of the money, as well as his carpets and rugs, the keloĝlan went home. He was now a rich man with a house, two stables, plenty of carpets and rugs, and a large sum of money to spend. He lived happily always after that.

Wise brother -- freezer to death ~~in~~ wrapped in share of wealth
he demands (money) while Keloĝlan survives in share
(carpets) that his brother forced upon him

Simpleton -- survives wrapped in portion of wealth (carpets) his wise
brother forced upon him -- while wise brother freezes to
death in portion (money) he had demanded