

Story 1301 (189 Tape 1)

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Konya Province

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The Padişah's Youngest Daughter vs. Bandit Hasan

TEK
46.47
Once there was and twice there wasn't,¹ a long time ago,
when the sieve was in the straw,² when Allah had many crea-
tures /but it was a sin to talk too much/.³ Back then when
a camel was a town crier and a flea was the barber, when jinns⁴

¹Formulaic opening for many Turkish folktales, this is known as a tekerleme. A full tekerleme may run to several lines, though most narrators nowadays use only one or two parts of a tekerleme. The tekerleme is a nonsense jingle filled with paradoxes and other common incongruities. It is meant both to amuse and to alert the audience to the fact that a tale is to follow. Some of the humor is lost in translation because it is difficult to reproduce in English the rhyme scheme.

²The sieve is never in the straw. While threshing grain, workers pass the detached grain and finely ground straw through a large-mesh sieve. Longer pieces of straw which may still have grains attached to them do not pass through and will need further threshing. So, the straw is in the sieve, not the sieve in the straw.

³The bracketed clause was not spoken by the narrator but was supplied by the editor because it is usually provided at that point in this tekerleme.

⁴The word jinn suggests two very different kinds of supernatural creatures. The first is the huge supernatural being who comes forth from a bottle or appears in response to some signal, such as the rubbing of a magic lamp or ring. This

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used to play cirit⁵ in the Turkish baths, there was a padişah who had three daughters. Like most padişahs of the time, this padişah was wealthy, and as a result, he and his family led a very comfortable and pleasant life. The royal treasury was full of gold, and so the padişah could afford any entertainment or other luxury that he chose.

For some time the padişah reigned happily, but then he encountered a serious difficulty. The royal treasury began to be repeatedly robbed. Every night thieves carried off a sack of gold. Although he did everything he could think of to protect his treasury, the gold continued to disappear. Everyone in the palace was concerned about this problem--even his three daughters. Finally the oldest daughter went to the padişah and said, "My father, I shall guard the treasury to-night."

"No, you cannot do that," said the padişah. "It might be too dangerous a thing for you to do." But after the oldest

creature then proceeds to give the caller supernatural or magic aid to achieve what he wishes. The other kind of jinn is never seen. It is a spiritual force referred to in some Sufi belief and in other mystical systems.

⁵Cirit (pronounced jirit) was an ancient form of jousting among Turkish people. Instead of attacking each other with spears or lances, as combatants in European tournaments did, the mounted participants in cirit contests threw sharp javelins at each other.

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daughter insisted and insisted upon doing this, her father at last agreed to let her undertake this work.

The girl selected a good sword and took up her position to guard the treasury. Shortly after midnight, however, she became so tired that she fell asleep. On the following morning it was discovered that another bag of gold was missing from the treasury.

After this news had spread throughout the palace, the middle daughter went to the padişah and said, "My father, give me permission to guard the treasury tonight."

"No, you could not do it. Your older sister tried, but she failed. How then could you do it?"

"Give me at least a chance to try," pleaded the middle daughter. After she had repeated her request several times, the padişah relented and gave her permission to

Like her older sister, the middle daughter selected a good sword and began keeping watch at the treasury. She too fell asleep after she had been on guard for a while. Between that time and dawn another bag of gold disappeared from the treasury.

On the third day the youngest daughter went to the padişah and said, "Father, it is my turn to guard the treasury

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tonight. Give me your permission to do that

"Very well," answered the padişah. "Your older sisters tried to do this and failed. Why shouldn't you try too? I shall not disappoint you. Go ahead."

The youngest daughter took a sword and began her watch at the treasury. Around midnight an unaccountable drowsiness began to affect her, but she was prepared for this, for she had been told how her older sisters had fallen asleep at their posts. She nicked one of her fingers with her sword and then poured salt into the open wound. She knew that the pain from this would be sufficient to keep her awake

Shortly after that the girl heard footsteps approaching the treasury. She placed herself out of sight behind the door. The door then opened very slowly and a man's head stretched cautiously into the room. Swinging her sword as hard as she could, she managed to cut off that head. Then another head cautiously entered the room, and she swung at that too. Although she did not decapitate the second intruder, she wounded his head so badly that one of his ears fell to the floor. Convinced that this second thief would also die, the girl closed the door and went to sleep

The following morning the padişah woke up thinking that

*Salt in cut
to stay awake*

*decapitating
wounding*

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he had probably lost another bag of gold. But he was also concerned about the safety of his youngest daughter, and so he hastened at once to the treasury. When he arrived there, he was appalled by the sight of so much blood, and he feared that something had happened to his daughter. But then he found her asleep and safe. Lying near her were the headless body of one thief and the severed ear of the other thief, but that second thief had managed to drag himself away before morning, and he was nowhere to be found.

The padişah was delighted with the success of his youngest daughter, and he ordered a large festival to celebrate the event. There were no more thefts from the treasury, and so life at the palace returned to its former state of happiness.

One day the grand vizier appeared before the ruler and said, "Padişah, efendi,⁶ a son of the padişah of such and such a country has just arrived here, and he brought a very fine horse as a gift to you. He has done so because he wishes to ask you for the hand of one of your daughters in marriage." Now it so happened that the padişah was very fond of fine

⁶A mild honorific, comparable to sir, it usually follows a first name: Hasan Efendi. At one time it was used to show respect to distinguished people, but it has become so deval-

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horses, and he spent much of his spare time buying splendid horses and riding them, and so he was very pleased with the gift. "Let the foreign prince come in to talk with me," he said.

The two talked together for a couple of hours, and at the end of that time the padişah had agreed to give this young man one of his daughters if that girl was willing. "Let me first ask my daughters to see if one of them is willing to marry you. Come back tomorrow, and I shall give you a more definite answer."

After the prince had left, the padişah called his oldest daughter and said to her, "The son of a padişah of such and such a country has just arrived here at the palace. He wishes to marry one of my daughters. Would you like to marry him?"

"No, Father. I am not yet interested in getting married."

The padişah then asked his second daughter the same question. She gave him the same answer that her older sister had:

"No, Father. I am not yet interested in getting married."

When he called his third daughter and asked her the same question, she replied, "Well, I have not yet given any thought to getting married, but if you think that I should accept offer, I shall not refuse."

uated in the twentieth century that it now is used only for servants and children.

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"All right. Then I shall comply with his request and give you to him as his bride. His is a very rich country and one where excellent horses are bred. You may be happier living there than you are here."

"Very well," answered the girl.

The padişah then sent word to the visiting prince that he would give his youngest daughter to him. The prince returned to the palace to accept this offer and to thank the padişah for his kindness. He surprised the padişah, however, by saying that he wanted the wedding celebration to take place not there but in his own country. "If I were to agree to have the celebration here, the people of my country would be ashamed of me. As soon as I get back home, I shall arrange to have the wedding celebration held there. Also, tell your daughter not to go to the trouble of packing and taking with her a trousseau.

"How can that be? This all seems very unusual!"

"I should prefer to have the two of us simply mount our horses and ride to my father's country without any delay and without the inconvenience of carrying baggage." The prince was so insistent about this that the padişah decided to let him have his way in the matter.

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After all of these things had been agreed upon, the foreign prince and the youngest daughter of the padişah mounted their horses and set out for the prince's country. As they rode along, the girl kept wondering why the prince wore such a large turban and why he never took it off, but she said nothing about this to him. After they had been traveling for some time, they became tired, and they decided to stop and rest on the peak of a mountain they were passing over. The girl said

put your head in my lap and sleep for a while. Then I shall put my head in your lap and get some rest too."

The prince agreed to this. He lay down, put his head in her lap, and appeared to fall asleep. As soon as she thought he was asleep, she untied the turban and took it off. "Alas!" thought. "Is this the thief whose ear I cut off at the treasury?"

The man had not really been asleep at all. He now opened his eyes and asked, "Do you recognize me? You killed my older brother by cutting off his head, and then you cut off my ear so that I can no longer appear before people with my head uncovered. To avenge all that you have done to me, I decided to marry you. I am the thief Hasan, well known in several countries. Do you recognize me now?"

Avenger

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When the girl heard his name, she shuddered. She was very frightened and utterly confused about what she should try to do.

He said, "You cannot escape from me. I am going to kill you right here where there is nobody to help you. I am going to set you on fire and burn you to death." He then tied her to a tree and began to gather twigs and branches to pile around her. When he went into a nearby forest to get some more wood, she tried to slip out of the ropes with which he had tied her. After several attempts, she finally managed to get loose. She ran down the side of the mountain, and when she came to a road, she saw a caravan ⁵⁴⁻⁵⁷ approaching. Rushing toward the caravan, she cried out, "Please help me! Please help me!"

The caravan leader was startled. He asked, "Who are you? What are you doing here in such a place? Are you a jinn or some other supernatural creature?"⁷

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⁷If 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 inmisin cinmisin?--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." But in most uses of this expression in Archive holdings, the question seems to be that given in the text above, for otherwise the response "Neither" would make no sense.

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"I am neither a jinn nor any other supernatural creature. I am a girl, and I am a human being like you. Such and such things have happened to me. Hide me in your caravan. Protect me from that fierce Bandit Hasan."

Most of those who heard the words "Bandit Hasan" were afraid to help her, but there was one old merchant at the very end of the caravan who had the courage to protect the girl. His load was made up of rolls of silk and satin. He simply rolled the girl up inside one of these bolts of cloth. "Bandit Hasan will not be able to find you there," he said.

After the caravan had moved along a little farther, it halted by Bandit Hasan. "Halt! Halt! Halt!" shouted Bandit Hasan, and the caravan came to a stop.

"What is the matter? What do you want?" asked the leader of the caravan.

"Have you seen such and such kind of girl along your way?"

"No, we have not seen any girl of that kind."

"You are lying!" shouted Bandit Hasan. "She should be right about here by now. You must be hiding her from me." Holding up a thin iron bar, he said, "I shall heat this iron and plunge it into each of your bales of materials. If girl is inside one of them, she will die. If I do not locate her, then you may pass on."

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"Don't do that, Hasan, for that will damage our fabrics other goods. We have already told you that we have not seen the girl you are seeking."

But no matter what anyone said, Bandit Hasan was Bandit Hasan, and so he proceeded to do what he had threatened to do. He built a fire and heated the iron bar in it. When it was red-hot, he began plunging it into bale after bale of the goods carried in the caravan.

When Bandit Hasan came to the end of the caravan, he was spoken to by the old merchant. "Don't do this to me, son. My load is different from that of all the others in this caravan, it is made up entirely of silks and satins." Showing the bandit some of these materials, he said, "How could I hide anyone in these expensive fabrics? They are so valuable that I cannot permit people even to touch them." Speaking in this he persuaded the bandit that the girl was not among his wares.

Seeing that, the leader of the caravan said, "Let us continue on our way."

At the end of the journey, the old merchant took the youngest daughter of the padişah to his home. There he said to her, "I have a son whom I should like to have you marry

"Very well. I shall comply with your wish, but only upon

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one condition. That condition is that you will build me a comfortable and safe house which will be secure against Bandit Hasan."

The merchant agreed to this condition, and he immediately ordered that such a house be built. The windows and doors were all very strong and secure. On one side of the gate before the house he chained two lions; and on the other side he chained two tigers

The youngest daughter was married at the end of a wedding celebration that lasted for forty days and forty nights. In the back of her mind, however, was the fear that Bandit Hasan would sooner or later find her and kill her. One day while she was sleeping in her bed, a noise startled her, and she woke up. Before her stood Bandit Hasan, but she could hardly believe it. She thought, "Is this just a dream, or is he really here?" But when she looked again, she realized that Bandit Hasan was actually there. "How did you get in here?" asked the girl

"I placed some meat before the lions and tigers, and, as a result, they did not harm me as I walked past them."

"Then I suppose that I have no choice but to go with you. We had better go before my husband wakes up."

"When they reached the front gate, the bandit said, "You go first.

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"No. You go first, and do not delay, for if my husband awakens and sees you, he will have you torn apart by the lions and tigers." But when the bandit started to pass through the gate, the girl herself shouted, "Lions, stop him! Tigers, tear him to pieces!"

Bandit
helpful

After these fierce animals had quickly killed Bandit Hasan, the girl breathed freely for the first time in a long while. She returned to her bedroom and slept more peacefully than she had since her arrival in that place

When her husband arose the next morning, he saw some human hair and some bones by the front gate. Returning to their bedroom, he awakened his wife and asked, "What happened during the night?"

"Last night Bandit Hasan came here to take me away and kill me, but I had our lions and tigers tear him to pieces

After that there was nothing that bothered them. The son of the merchant and the youngest daughter of the padişah led a happy and secure life together.