

Story 1182 (1990 Tape 4)

Narrator: Unidentified man

Location: Malatya, capital of  
Malatya Province

Date: 1990

Taped for ATON by Dr. Mehmet Yalvaç

Prince Nigâr<sup>1</sup> Disenchanted<sup>2</sup>

The woman and the camels then left the cave, but the girl remained there. After a while a hawk appeared in the cave. After removing its bird clothes, it jumped into the pool and bathed for a while. While it was doing this, the girl took his feathers and hid them. Thus, when he returned to the place where he had left his feathers, he could not find them. He asked the girl where his feathers were, but at first she refused to tell him. Then she said to him, "If you will swear to marry me, I shall give you back your feathers." He took an oath to that effect, and they at once became man and wife.

"I am Nigâr, the son of the padişah of India. When I was still a small child, I was kidnapped by the fairies. I have lived with them for so long that I am now just like them. I cannot escape from them." After a while he flew away, but each evening he would return to her

<sup>1</sup>Nigâr is usually a female name. This is the first instance so far in ATON in which it is a male name.

<sup>2</sup>This tale begins in medias res on the tape in ATON. We suspect, however, that this is a result of some inadvertency in the taping, for the opening of the text here is not the way

*Transformation  
131.135*

This continued for more than a year, and by then the girl was pregnant. When her time of delivery was near, she said to her husband, "I cannot bear a child here and care for it properly. We must go either to the home of my parents or the home of your parents

"Let us go to the home of my parents," he said. "I can fly there, and you can sit on my wings as I do so." In this way they went little, they went far, and all the while they went straight toward his father's palace, even though that course led them over rivers and through mountain ranges. The girl, whose name was Hub, was accepted in the palace, where she bore a son that night. Niġâr said to his wife, "Call our child Bahtiyar," and that was the name she gave the baby.

The padişah had three daughters, all of whom liked Hub from the moment she entered the palace. The padişah's wife heard about Hub, and she too was attracted to the girl. The padişah's wife ordered her oldest daughter to spend that night with Hub and try to discover more about her. But the oldest daughter grew drowsy and thus failed to discover very much about Hub. At midnight the bird, Niġâr, returned, and called, from the window ledge, "Hub, honey!"

"What are you saying, my Niġâr?" asked the girl.

Turkish folktales begin. The tale is a variant of "Şemsi Bâni, Padişah of Pigeons," ATON No. 122.

*Fondaci  
effendi*

"How is my wife doing?" asked the boy.

"She kisses your hand, my sultan," answered the girl

"Who is that with you?" asked the bird prince.

"She is the oldest princess here," said Hub.

On the following morning the oldest princess went to her mother to report what she had discovered during the night. She said, "Mother, this strange girl talked with someone during the night, but I was so sleepy that I could not understand what they were talking about.

On the second night the middle daughter came to keep watch in Hub's room. Again at midnight the bird returned and spoke with Hub. Their conversation was the same as it had been night before. "Who is with you tonight?" asked the boy.

"It is the middle princess," said the girl.

In the morning the wife of the padişah asked the middle daughter, "Well, what did you discover?"

"Nothing, really," said the middle daughter, "for I too was too drowsy to notice anything except that someone visited Hub during the night and spoke with her."

The following night it was the turn of the youngest daughter to keep vigil in Hub's room. In order to remain awake throughout the night, the youngest daughter cut her finger slightly and poured salt into the wound

Again the bird came to the window at midnight and called, "Hub, honey!"

*finger cut/salt  
to maintain wake  
full*

Story 1182

"What is it that you are saying?" Hub asked.

"How is my wife getting along?"

"She kisses your hands, my sultan Nigâr."

"Who is with you tonight?" Nigâr asked.

"This is the youngest princess."

When the bird prince heard this, he flew away, Pr-r-r-t!<sup>3</sup>

The youngest daughter had pretended to be asleep, but she had remained awake, and she had heard clearly the conversation between Hub and the bird. When she was reporting this in the morning to her mother, she asked, "Wasn't my long-lost brother named Nigâr?"

"Yes, he was!" said the mother, greatly excited by what she had just heard. She herself now ran to Hub's room and said to Hub, "Tell us what this is all about!" Then, after Hub had told her all about her relationship with Nigâr, she said, "When he comes tonight, do not answer him for the first three times he calls. Then ask him to come inside to see the baby."

At midnight the bird reappeared at the window and said, "Hub, honey!"

No answer.

"Hub, honey!"

No answer.

"Hub, honey!"

<sup>3</sup>Onomatopoeia for the sound of a bird ascending in flight.

No answer. But when he repeated his call for the fourth time, Hub answered, "Why do you do nothing but say, 'Hub, honey! Hub, honey!'"? Why don't you come inside and see our baby?"

*Transformation*  
At that, Nigār entered the room. He shook off his feathers and became a handsome boy again. As soon as he did that, his mother grabbed the bird feathers and threw them into the flames of the fireplace

Just as soon as the smoke from the burning feathers escaped into the outside air from the chimney, a host of fairies landed on the roof of the palace to attack its inhabitants. Nigār's cousin, a lame girl, went to the roof and confronted them. "Hu-u-u-u!" she shouted. "Nigār has been held too long in your world. From now on he will remain in our world!"

The leader of the fairies addressed his followers, saying "If a lame human girl can shame us in this way, just imagine what a normal human being might do to us!" The entire host of fairies then departed.

*Disappearance + marriage*  
Now that Nigār had been recovered from the fairy world, he and Hub were given a proper wedding celebration. In this way they were married twice. They ate and drank and lived happily together. May all of us look forward to the same pleasure.