

Story #222 (Milli Kütüphane Tape)

Narrator: Saliha Arel

Sivas

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The Poor Girl and the Padişah

Once there was and once there was not a poor family, and this family had one daughter. They were very poor, but the girl was very, very beautiful, so beautiful that they never let her go out of the house.

The father had to work all day long to provide for his family, and the mother worked around the house, getting whatever the girl needed. But the girl was never allowed to go out. She grew up a little, and one day she was looking out of the window when she noticed a big mansion across the way.

"Oh," she said, "I wonder what good sort of food is served there? you, Mother?" she asked.

"It is the vizier's house, so the food must be very fine. But what is it that you would like to have? Tell me what you would like to have, and I shall try to get it for you."

The next day the mother felt very sad about her daughter's desire, so she

She knocked at the door and said,

you have to eat in this house. She is my only child, and I should like to give her what she wants. Could you not please put just a taste of whatever you are having on a plate, and I can take it to her?

The lady of the house said, "All right. You go back to your house, and I shall send it over with my cook." She prepared a tray full of food and sent

it across to the girl for her to eat.

She ate of it and of course she liked it. The daughter thought, their food is delicious and they live in such a beautiful house, they must be very nice people."

From that day on, daily they sent food across the way to the poor man's daughter. One day the mother had to leave the house, and she told her daughter, "Do not open the door for anyone, no matter who."

Well, the girl was in her 'teens now; she was not a child any more. In spite of that, she was not to open the door until her mother came home, because her mother did not want her to be seen by anyone.

Anyhow, the mother left the house, but right after she left there was a knock at the door, and the girl saw that her tray of food was being sent to her. She opened the door to get her food, and when she had taken it from the hand of the cook, the cook turned around and ran back. He went directly to the lady of the mansion, and, "Oh, my lady," he said, "the daughter of that poor woman to whom we send food is so beautiful. She is as beautiful as the fourteenth day of the moon." Why do we not get this girl for your son? Why do you try to find someone else for him? Why do you not just ask for this girl?"

The lady of the house saw the wisdom of what the cook said, and toward evening of that day she went to visit the poor woman. She was asked in, and was seated. After a while, the lady of the mansion asked if she could see the old woman's daughter.

"She will be in presently," said the old woman. "She is preparing the coffee, and she will be in to serve it."

The girl made coffee and brought it in to serve to the lady. The asked her many questions, because she liked her very much. She said she was very happy that she had seen the girl, and she took off a diamond ring

was wearing on her finger and put it on the girl's finger

The girl was very happy. "See what a beautiful ring the lady gave me!" she said. And then the lady from the mansion went home.

the girl's mother did not approve of the visitor's giving her daughter the ring. "It should not be that way," she said. And when the father came home and saw his wife in a thoughtful mood, he asked, "What is wrong?"

The wife answered, "Well, there is nothing wrong, but to my mind it should not be this way. The lady from the mansion across the way came today and put a diamond ring on our daughter's finger."

And the father answered, "Well, it does not matter. They put it on, and they may take it back again.

The next day, whatever good there was in the world was sent to their home. They asked this poor family to move into a more decent house, and every day they sent food not only for the girl but for the whole family.

Now let us go back to the mansion. It seems that the grandmother had planned to have her grandson married to a relative of her own, and she greatly disapproved of the engagement between the young man and the poor family's daughter. "Why," she said, "how could you marry our son to a poor man's daughter?"

The mother said, "It does not matter whether they are poor or not. It is only God who does not fall and rise. Maybe they are down now, but because of us they will be up again."

The grandmother insisted on breaking the engagement, and the mother insisted on keeping it, and she also told her son that after once seeing the girl, if he changed his mind he would be sorry about it.

But the son decided that he did not want to marry a poor man's daughter, and so the mother, grieving and in tears, asked the boy to go and get the ring back, and the ring was taken back.

The girl began to cry, saying, "What have I done to them? She gave me a beautiful ring, and then they came and took it away from me." And she cried very much from then on. The girl did not know that that ring was an engagement ring--did not know anything about that. She only knew that it had been a beautiful ring and that she had it no longer. Well, anyway, she cried so that she lost her health and lost weight; she became ill

father of the girl felt very unhappy about his daughter's becoming sick. He decided one day that he would go to the mosque early in the morning for his prayers, and then begin walking. And the very first living thing he met he would marry to his daughter--whether beast or boy. "I shall do this to save my daughter," he decided.

The next day after his prayers he started walking along the street. He went and went and went. He went a little, he went far. He went straight over rivers and dales. And when he turned back and looked, he had gone only the length of a needle. Yet he had met no one. He said, "Will I not be able to marry my daughter to anyone? Please, Lord, help me!" And he went on again.

At last he came to a fountain, where he drank a little water and prayed to God again to help him. After he had prayed again to God to help him meet someone, he saw an old, old man with white hair and white mustache, a very old man. He caught him by the arm and said, "Listen to me, father. I prayed God to help me meet someone, and I walked for hours and days, and I went over rivers and dales to meet someone, and finally you came across my way. I shall give my daughter to you in marriage."

the old man said, "Son, how can I marry your daughter at such an age? I am a poor soul, anyway. I cannot support myself, even. How can I take your daughter?"

"Please, sir," said the father, "do not refuse my daughter. Even if you

cannot earn your living, I shall work for you and I shall support you, only you must marry my daughter."

And he came back with this old, bearded man. "I prayed God to help me meet someone to marry our daughter, and for weeks I walked. I walked a little; I walked far. I walked straight over rivers and over dales. And he was the only person who came across my way. I brought him home, and I am going to marry my daughter to him."

"Oh, man," said the wife, "he is older than her own father. How can you marry her to him?"

"It is her fate," said her father. "I prayed to God, and nothing--either man or beast--came across my way until this man, and I have to give her to him."

The girl did not want the man; she refused to marry him, but they insisted on it so much that finally she consented and they married her to him.

He looked sympathetic to her that night. She liked his beard. And the next morning when her father inquired how she liked the man, she said, "Oh, I like him very much. It is not only his beard that is white; he has white hair on his chest, too."

Now let us go back to the vizier's house. By this time, the preparations for the son's wedding had been completed, and the poor family received a special invitation for the wedding.

That night the young girl said to her old husband, "We are invited to the wedding of the vizier's son, and I have nothing to wear. Can you not somehow manage something for me to wear?"

And her husband said, "All right. Tomorrow after I leave the house, you go to that pink rosebush, and under the rosebush you will find a box. Bring it in without letting anyone see it. And that is where you will find the dress you are going to wear."

The next day after her husband had gone, the girl went out into the garden, and under the pink rosebush she found a box. She brought it in. There was a golden dress inside the box, and she ran to her mother to show her the dress. "Look, Mother!" she cried. "Look what my man has given me to wear to the vizier's son's wedding!"

That night she thanked her husband very much. "It is a beautiful dress," she said, "and I like it very much, but I have no accessories to go with it, not even shoes."

The old man said, "All right, my dear. Tomorrow morning you will go to the white rosebush. Under it you will find a box, and that is where your accessories are."

The next morning after her husband had gone, she went to the white rosebush and there was a box, just as her husband had said. She brought the box in, and whatever she looked for--shoes and bracelets and necklaces, and everything to go with a gorgeous dress--was in it.

Everything was complete, but that night she said, "I have everything I need, but I cannot go there alone. My mother must come along with me, and she has nothing to wear." And her husband was good enough to direct her to go to another rosebush, where she would find another box, and in that box they found a set of clothing for the mother, complete from ring to shoes

The wedding day arrived, and the mother and the beautiful daughter went to the wedding. During the wedding ceremony the bride and the bridegroom went up the stairs, and while the bridegroom was climbing up the stairs he caught a glimpse of the beautiful girl. As soon as he had seen the beautiful girl he left the bride and ran down the stairs, in love only with the beautiful girl. As soon as the bridegroom had left the bride, the bride and her mother understood that they were not good enough for him and that he would never come back to them, so they went away.

When the vizier's son had left his bride and had come running toward the beautiful girl, the girl and her mother felt it was not proper to stay there any longer, because the girl had been the cause of the bridegroom's leaving his bride, so they ran home.

At night her husband asked her how the wedding had been, and she told him everything--how they went there, and how the bridegroom when he saw her left the bride and ran down the stairs, and how they had run away.

On the other hand, in the vizier's mansion, after he had left his bride, the bridegroom went to his mother and said, "Mother, I have seen that girl you talked to me about. She really is beautiful, and I want to get married to her. I do not want that other bride.

And she said, "Oh, you cannot arrange it, because she is married already. You see, you wanted to do what your grandmother wanted, and so we took the engagement ring back and she got married to someone else. You cannot get married to her because she is a married woman already."

Finally he begged his mother so much that she decided to go and pay them a visit, to see what she could do. And she did go and visit the poor family, and talked with them about her son's intentions

The girl said, "It is impossible. I am married, and, what is more, I love my husband."

Finally they decided to go to the judge and plead their case. The judge each one separately; first he took the boy. The boy said, "We were engaged, and how could she go and marry someone else when she was engaged to e?"

"Well, whether or not you were engaged, she is now married to someone else, and you just cannot take her back," the judge said. And he was through with the boy



Then he took in the girl. The judge asked why she gave the ring back, why she did not want the young man.

She said, "They have been very good to me all my life. They gave me food and everything. And one day they came and gave me a very nice ring. I was little, and I did not know what it was all about. And then, a few days later, they came and took the ring away. My father was angry, and he vowed that he would give me to the first living being that came across his way. And he started going, and this man met him, and then he fulfilled his vow and gave me to him. Now I am very happy with my husband, and I do not want to give him up. I do not want the vizier's son," she said.

"But your husband is not the son of a vizier," said the judge.

"I do not care who he is," she answered. "Whether he is the son of a vizier, whether he is rich or poor, this man has been good to me, and he has tried to do everything in his power to please me, so I must not give him up."

Now it seems in those days the padişahs themselves used to act as judges, and the judge in this case was the padişah himself. And he went on inquiring into the case. "How would you know your husband?" he asked the girl. "you describe your husband to me?"

And she said, "Yes, I can. He is an old man and he is very, very good. He has a long white beard, and he has white hairs on his chest."

When she said that, the judge slipped his robe off his shoulders, there he was--the girl recognized him as her own husband. And she said, "Are you my husband?"

He said, "Yes, and I am also the padişah. I came across your father's way, and I am the one who married you." Although he had married the girl, in keeping with her father's vow that he would marry her to the first living thing he met on his way, he had never told his wife that he was the padişah



himself.

Of course, when the vizier's son found out that the man his fiancée had married was the padişah, he had nothing left to say. And the girl was so happy that they had a real wedding this time, one that lasted forty days and forty nights. And they had their wish fulfilled.