

Story 100 (Tape 7, 1961-1962)

Narrator: Ayşe Güldemir,
16 (See Notes
on her)

Location: Ankara, though
family was from
Tokat area

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The Köse and the Three Bandits

Once there was and once there was not a köse* uncle. And this Köse Dayı** had an animal, a horse, and a wife.

*The beardless man, victim of some glandular deficiency, is a common type in Turkish folktales. Whether he is also a more common type in Turkish life than he is elsewhere is difficult to determine, though Turks are aware of such men, whereas Americans and Britons are usually not. This is not an effeminate man, necessarily, or a homosexual. The köse in folktales is usually "normal" sexually and is usually married. Along with his beardlessness are other bodily features that set him apart from others: short legs, short stature, and a roundish, heart-shaped face. Turks claim to be able to pick out the köse by these body features. I (NSW) am still not able to do so after 10 years of trying. We have pictures of köses, and supposedly these should help one to identify the type.

In Turkish folktales the köse appears in two primary roles 1) that of the trickster, and 2) that of the ogre. Actually, these two roles merge more often than not. He is a trickster whose trickery and wiliness are engaging, however unethical. When he is tricking the protagonist of the tale (i.e., when he himself is not the protagonist), he is pictured as cruel and vicious. He becomes monstrous, and, therefore, it becomes quite acceptable to treat him as an inhuman monster, an ogre. He is often killed at the end of the tale. In several of the Aarne-Thompson Types which appear in Turkey, the köse plays the role which A-T ascribe to an "ogre."

For further comments on the köse type, see notes in TAL: ALIVE IN TURKEY.

**Dayı is the word for maternal uncle, of lesser status than the paternal uncle, amca, pronounced amja.

Trickster
Trickery

One day he went to cut wood with his (horse.) When he was coming back from the woods, he met three bandits. When he saw the bandits coming, he put a (gold piece) on the rump of the horse. As the bandits came closer, the horse dropped the gold piece down to the ground. And the bandits said, "Does your horse evacuate gold?" And one said, "Sell it to me!"

"All right. I will," said Köse Dayı. And he got much money from the bandits, saying, "My horse evacuates gold. My horse gives gold," he explained, "but this is what you have to do. You have to tie him in the stable, and give him a whole kazan (similar in quantity to a bushel) full of water and a kazan full of grain, and do not open the door for a whole month. And that is how he gives gold. And saying this, he deceived them.

the bandits said, "All right." As soon as they got home, they tied the horse in the stable. They gave him a kazan full of water and a kazan full of grain, and then they shut the door. They did not open the door for a whole month, and they were very happy thinking that all that time the horse was throwing gold. And after a month--it was a whole month--they wanted to open the door. They forced it, but it would not open. They said, "Oh, there must be much gold inside!" They pushed and pushed on the door, and it still would not open. Well, they said, "Since the door does not open there must be heaps of gold inside.

ell, the door did not open, and did not open. And from another side they pushed it and they pushed it, until finally it opened. And what do you think they saw? The poor horse was dead--and there was no gold! And then they were angry. "Let us go kill that Köse Dayı!" And the bandits (three brothers) went to kill Köse Dayı.

Köse Dayı knew all the time that they would be after him. And he said to his wife, "Let us kill a hen and get its entrails out and wind them around your neck. And then I shall cut them and blood will run out, and you will fall down and they will think you are dead. Then when I blow my whistle, you will jump up, and they will think you have come back from the dead." So they killed a hen and wound its entrails around the neck of Köse's wife. And the bandits did come

As soon as the bandits came, Köse began to scold his wife. He said, "Why did you not make some soup, since we were going to have visitors? Why did you not cook some food? Look, woman, we have visitors!" And thus they deceived the bandits into thinking that Köse was angry at his wife. "Kneel down," he said, "and I shall cut your throat. And he knelt down and the woman knelt down, and he cut, but what he cut was only the entrails, and the blood poured out. And Köse said, "There, wife is dead." And the woman lay still, and the bandits thought she was really dead. Then Köse blew his whistle, and as soon as the whistle blew the woman jumped up. Köse said, See, I have such a (magic whistle) that when I blow it, even the

dead come alive."

"All right," said the bandits. "Will you not sell it to us?" Thus Köse deceived them again. [Ayşe laughed with delight.] "Sell it to us," they begged.

Köse said, "All right." And he got much money from them, saying, "It is a magic whistle; it brings back the dead. Now he deceived them!

The eldest brother of the bandits went home and really killed his wife. And he blew and blew the whistle, and the dead would not come alive. And again he blew and blew the whistle, and the dead did not come alive. And again he blew and blew the whistle, and the dead still would not come alive, because she was dead once. She was dead

And the second brother said, "You would not do it, but I can. I can make the magic whistle work." So he killed his wife. And he blew and blew the whistle, and the dead would not come alive. And he blew and blew the whistle, and the dead would not come alive. And again he blew and blew the whistle and the dead still would not come alive. That one was less than that one could not come alive.

Then the third brother said, "All right. Let me try. I will make the magic whistle work. And the other two said, 'No, no. Do not do that. We did it, and now our children have no mothers.' So the youngest brother did not kill his wife. But they all said, 'Let us go and kill Köse Dayı.' So they all went to kill Köse Dayı.

Köse Dayı knew that they would come back, and he was ready. He dug a grave and got into it, and he put a wire on top. Then he took a stick in his hand. He said to his wife, "Go inside the house and lock the doors and windows, and cry saying, "Oh, my Köse--my Köse is dead!"

Then appeared the bandits. As they were coming, the woman cried, "My Köse! Oh, my Köse!" Of course, she was crying to deceive the bandits. As she cried, "My Köse! My Köse!" they said, "What's wrong with your Köse?"

And she said, "My Köse is dead, and I have buried him!"

And when they found out that he was dead and buried already, they said, "At least let us go and spit at him or throw something at him." Although they could not kill him, at least they wanted to do something bad to him. They got into the grave. But Köse had a stick, and when one of them got near, he stuck out his stick and killed the bandit.

[story apparently truncated at end]