

Story 1196 (1990 Tape 9)

Narrator: İsmail Doğan, 73

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How ^{all} Keloğlan¹ Married the Padişah's Daughter

Once there was and once there was not a padişah who had an especially beautiful daughter. When a certain keloğlan saw this girl, he fell in love with her at once. But of course he was only a simple person, one of the common people, and the was a princess. However, this keloğlan was a very bold and very determined person, and so he decided to ask for the hand of the princess in marriage

Keloğlan went to the palace and was admitted into the presence of the padişah. He said, "My padişah, I have fallen in love with your daughter, and I have come here to ask for her hand in marriage by the will of Allah."²

*From the
efficiency*

¹The word keloğlan means bald boy, but the baldness is not that caused by aging. It is caused by ringworm infestation of the scalp. This disease often strikes the younger and perhaps improperly tended younger children of large peasant families. It is encouraged by uncleanliness. In folktales the keloğlan is a definite personality type, a winner, and a sympathetic figure. In tales the keloğlan image is often used as a disguise. Disguisers conceal their hair by covering it either with a sheepskin turned inside out or with the cleaned lining of a sheep's stomach.

²In such stories (as in real life in Turkey) the prospective bridegroom does not himself go to the father of the prospective bride to ask for her hand. A matchmaker is sent to do this negotiating. In this particular kind of tale (in which a peasant boy wishes to wed a princess) it is usually the boy's mother who

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The padişah reflected upon what his response should be to this daring request. He could simply drive this keloğlan away. He could, if he wished, even have this young man killed. because the keloğlan was one of the citizens of his land did not do either of these harsh things. Instead, he said to him, "Very well. Since you wish to have my daughter, I shall give her to you if you can accomplish a task that I shall for you." The padişah had once heard a very strange story about a weeping pomegranate tree and a laughing quince tree that grew atop a distant mountain. He did not really believe this story but he used it now in order to get rid of the keloğlan. He said "On the top of a distant mountain there are two trees: a weeping pomegranate tree and a laughing quince tree. I have heard it said that if anyone touches the quince tree, the pomegranate tree will weep; and if anyone touches the pomegranate tree, the quince tree will laugh. If you can bring those two trees to me I shall give you my daughter in marriage."

"All right, I shall start searching for those two trees immediately," said Keloğlan, "and when I find them, I shall bring them to you." But Keloğlan had no idea about which mountain it

serves as a matchmaker. The expression here " . . . by the will of Allah" is part of the formulaic dialogue carried on by the matchmaker and the parent of the girl. The former opens the discussion by saying, "I have come, by the will of Allah and the consent of the Prophet, to ask for the hand of your daughter in marriage to X, the son of Y, of such and such a place."

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was that the weeping pomegranate and the laughing quince grew on. He simply began climbing mountain after mountain in his travels in order to search for the trees. He did this day after day for months, but he could not find the two trees, and no one was able to give him directions about how he should proceed to locate them. One day when he was discouraged and sat thinking of his problem, he was approached by a jinn.³ 91-92

"What are you brooding about in that way?" asked the jinn

"Don't ask me such a question!" answered Keloğlan. But after a few minutes, he said, "I am in love with the daughter of the padişah of my land. The padişah will give me the girl in marriage only if I can bring him two special trees that he has heard about. One is a weeping pomegranate tree and the other is a laughing quince tree. But who knows where such trees grow? The padişah knew only that they grew atop a distant mountain. I have searched the tops of many mountains, but I have been unable to find such trees. That is the difficulty that I am thinking about.

The jinn answered, "I know where those two trees are

³The 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 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.

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growing. They are owned by a tribe of devils who are enemies of mine. I shall be glad to help you steal the trees from those devils. Climb on my back, and I shall carry you to the mountaintop where the trees are growing."

they arrived at that mountaintop, there were the two trees. "But how will we ever be able to pull them out and get away with them?" asked Keloğlan.

Alive "Do exactly as I tell you now. Dig the soil away from the roots of the trees. As soon as you begin to do that, the pomegranate will begin weeping loudly and the quince tree will begin roaring in laughter. This noise will bring many devils flying there out of the sky. When the devils arrive, grab first one tree and then the other, and pull them from the earth by their roots. Do as I have told you and pay no attention to anything else."

Keloğlan went to the foot of the first tree and began to dig away the soil, and then he did the same at the foot of the other tree. A whole swarm of small devils flew there from the sky and began shouting at him and quarreling with him about what he was doing. But this keloğlan was both brave and strong. He shouted back and quarreled with the devils, and during this shouting and quarreling back and forth, Keloğlan pulled the two trees out by their roots. Then the jinn grabbed the trees, and with Keloğlan on his back, he flew away. The whole tribe of small devils flew after him, but they were no match for this

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jinn, who flew at a much greater speed than they could.

When the weeping pomegranate tree and the laughing quince tree were safely in the courtyard of the palace, Keloğlan went to the padişah and said courageously, "My padişah, I have brought you the trees you requested, and now I am here to ask again for the hand of your daughter."

The padişah was utterly amazed. Although he had heard an account of the weeping pomegranate tree and the laughing quince tree, he had not known that there were really two trees of this kind. But when he saw them standing in his courtyard, he could no longer doubt their existence. The jinn had disappeared, the padişah believed that Keloğlan himself had brought those unusual trees. There was, therefore, only one thing that he could say: "I promised you my daughter in marriage if you could bring me these two trees. You have brought them, and now my daughter is yours. You may take her and go where you will with her."

This is the way in which Keloğlan managed to marry the princess. I have heard that they are still living together happily.