

Story #336 (Tape 1, 1972)

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The Beautiful Girl Whose Wish Was Not Fulfilled

Once there lived a woman in a hut on the mountain. She was pregnant and went to the public bath to deliver her child. She said to the woman working at the bath, "Since I have no place else to go, would you let me have my baby here?"

"Why not?" answered the bath attendant

So the poor woman delivered her child in the bath. It was a girl. Right after the baby was born, the walls of the bath moved apart and there appeared three dervishes.

The first one said, "I am putting a talisman on the girl's arm. Take care never to lose it, for if she loses it, she will die."

The second dervish said, "I name the girl Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber (The beautiful girl whose wish was not fulfilled)."

And the third said, "Wherever this girl walks, grass will grow there. Whenever she laughs, roses will fall from her mouth, and whenever she cries, pearls and gold will drop from her eyes. You will be a rich woman."

Then the dervishes disappeared. The poor woman took her baby girl home. Whenever the baby cried, pearls and gold dropped from her eyes. In a short time the woman became rich. She built a mansion

The narrator actually says that she built an apartment house. The modern peasant views the urban apartment houses as the acme of grandeur and comfort, just as the older peasants considered the royal palace the ultimate in living accommodations.

of her old hut. When the girl started walking, grass grew wherever feet touched. When she grew up, her mother sent her to a teacher of the Arabic script.² The teacher also had a daughter who was older than Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber. By then the young girl's fame had become so wide-spread that even the padishah had heard about her and wanted her to marry his son. Her mother accepted the proposal. However, there was the matter of sending her to the padishah's palace. She asked the teacher, "Would you accompany my daughter to the padishah's palace?"

The teacher complied and took his own daughter along, too. The three women started on the way to the palace on horse back. On the road Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber became thirsty. Since her teacher had two bottles of water, she asked for some water. The teacher answered, "I'll give you some water if you give me one of your eyes." When the girl became extremely thirsty some time later, she agreed to trade one of her eyes for some water. Later she became thirsty again. This time the teacher asked for her other eye in return for some water. After she got the girl's other eye, she left the road under a tree and took her own daughter to the palace instead of her student.

Left all alone, the poor girl started crying and pearls and gold fell from her eyes. An old man happened to be passing by. When he saw the girl sitting all alone, in the midst of pearls and gold, he became curious. He asked, "What are you doing here all alone, my child?" The girl told her sad story. She said that she was left under the tree by her teacher, who had given her water in return for her eyes. The old

² Affluent families often had their children taught Arabic script so that they would be able to read the Koran. In many rural villages, however, still teach children Arabic for this purpose in special classes during the summer. Almost always it would be a woman who would be the teacher; the narrative demands that the teacher be a woman.

*Eye-giver
in exchange for
some water*

*Substituted
Bride*

man ^{pitied} the girl and said, "Come with me. I shall adopt you." He filled his bag with the pearls and the gold the girl had, cried, shortly afterwards he became affluent enough to have a mansion built

Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber lived in the old man's house for some time. One day she laughed, and roses blossomed on her cheeks. She gave the two roses to the old man and said, "Put these roses in a basket and go to the city where the padishah lives. As you pass by the palace, shout, 'I have roses for sale. If they ask you how much you ask for a rose, tell them 'I trade a rose for an eye. Then they will understand. If they ask you what you want in return for two roses, tell them 'I will give you two roses for two eyes.'"

flower seller

The old man put the roses in a basket and went to the padishah's city and started peddling the roses. The Koran teacher and her sister heard the old man's cry. The daughter said, "Mother, let's buy the roses. I am sure these are the ones that blossomed on Muradina Olamayan Dilber's cheeks. We will tell the padishah's son that they are on my cheeks when I laughed."

When they asked the old man how much he wanted for the roses, he said, "I'll give you one for one eye, and two for two eyes." He traded roses for the magic eyes. But he made a mistake. When they asked him where he lived, he gave them the wrong address.

He returned home and gave the eyes to the girl. She wore her eyes and as time passed the Koran teacher and her sister planned to steal the vital charm from Muradina Olamayan Dilber's arm. They dressed up as a woman and sent her to the house where she lived, where unfortunately she was killed. The padishah's son,

Life taken

mausoleum conception
Conception *for, really
vow*

showed him the roses. When he smelled the roses, she conceived a child³
By this time the woman whose mission was to steal the charm on the unfortunate
girl's arm had reached the old man's house. She knocked on the door and
said she was a traveler and that she wanted to spend the night with them.
She was welcomed. That night when the girl was sleeping, the woman removed
the charm from her arm, and the girl died that instant.

The old man had a magnificent ^{room?} ~~mausoleum~~ built for the girl. Its
threshold was of silver, and its door was of gold. It was the girl's
wish to have ^a mausoleum of this type, for she had told the old man one
day, "Uncle, when I die, bury me in a mausoleum with a silver threshold
and a golden door. I am sure you can afford one because I cried for you
plenty of gold and pearls." had the girl's name, Muradina
Dilber, inscribed on the portal of the mausoleum.

*Dark bed
weak*

The woman who killed the girl by stealing the charm took it to the
palace to the Koran teacher and her daughter. They put it in a drawer

secret. One day the padishah's son went hunting in the mountains.
He heard a voice calling the name Muradina Nail Olamayen Dilber. He
went in the direction from which the voice came. The voice stopped when
he reached the mausoleum. When he raised the lid of the coffin in the
tomb, he saw a little boy sucking the finger of his mother, Muradina Nail
Olamayan Dilber.⁴ The padishah's son liked the boy so well that he decided
to take him to his palace. He told his wife and his mother-in-law to take

Infant burial

A bad telling of this tale + the ambiguity of the pronoun she almost
the narrative pattern here. It is not the padishah's wife who conceived
child in a magical manner (as the tale at this point seems to suggest)
but the unfortunate protagonist. Subsequently it is the "dead" girl
has the infant, not the daughter of the teacher of Arabic.

"There is no explanation for the sudden
of a child in the mausoleum

unpre- ceded and rare

very good care of the boy. "If anything happens to him," he said, "I will throw you out of you out."

Some time later when the padishah's wife opened the chest, the little boy happened to be present, and he took the charm from the chest drawer. He cried so hard when she tried to take it away from him that the padishah's son came there to see what the matter was. His wife said, "I cannot stop the boy from crying constantly. Take him back to where you found him."

The padishah's son took the little boy back to the palace. As soon as the little boy placed the charm in his mother's wrist, Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber came back to life. The padishah's son asked, "Are you Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber?"

"Yes," she answered, and told her story of the bride of the padishah's son. My mother sent me to the palace with my Koran teacher and her daughter. On the way they forced me to show my eyes to them. I saw how two roses bloomed on my cheeks when I smiled with the old man. My little boy must have found a way of retrieving the charm on which my life depends. Koran teacher proved to be my enemy. She had her daughter change places

your
padishah's son found
said to her daughter you know
swords or forty mules?"

5 formulaic expressions remaining.

Kir

unattainable
forty
formulaic expressions
Exclamation

They answered, "We do not want forty swords. We prefer the forty mules." Then they were sent back with the forty mules.⁶

After they had gone, the padishah's son married Muradina Nail Olamayan Dilber. Their wedding lasted for forty days and forty nights, and they lived happily after that.

The narrator seems to suggest that they were given the mules as a gift and that they departed with them. This misses the point of this convention. In hundreds and hundreds of Turkish folktales this question is a Hobson's choice, both responses being equally fatal. "Forty swords" represents death by beheading. "Forty mules" refers to being dragged to death or torn into forty parts as forty ropes are tied to forty mules and the mules are then whipped into a gallop.