

Story 1348 (1969 Tape 5)

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The Girl Named "Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire"

*name
meaningful*

Once in the old days there was a very poor woodcutter. Every day he would go to the forest and cut firewood. he would load it upon his donkey, take it back to his village, and there sell it. He earned barely enough money in this way to feed himself and his wife.

One day his wife spoke to him about this matter. said, ^{1,3} "Efendi"¹ we are not getting enough money from all of your hard work as a woodcutter. In the future when we have children, we shall not be able to provide for them on the small amount of money which you now earn. We should move to one of the big cities, where you can find work that will provide a better income."

¹A mild honorific, comparable to Sir, it usually follows a first name: Hasan Efendi. At one time it was used to show respect to distinguished people, but it has become so devaluated in the twentieth century that it now is used only for servants and children.

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After thinking about what his wife had said, the woodcutter agreed with her, and soon after that the two of them moved to Konya. The woman had already been pregnant for some time, and shortly after they arrived at Konya, her labor pains began quite suddenly. They still had not found a place to live in Konya, and so their situation was a very difficult one, for the woman was now writhing in pain.

While the woman was suffering in this way, the keeper of a public bath observed them and asked, "What is the matter? What is your difficulty?"

When the former woodcutter explained his wife's condition, the keeper of the bathhouse said, "You can stay temporarily at the bath, and your wife can have her child there

The man and his wife went to the bath, and there the woman gave birth to a girl. At the moment that the child was born, three (fairy) girls appeared in the bath, frightening the new mother so badly that she fainted. The fairy girls washed the newborn baby, and while they were doing so, one of them said to an old woman who was a bath attendant, "This girl will be named 'Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire.'"²

²The Turkish reads, "Muradına nail olmayan dilbert."

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The second fairy said, "Whenever this girl cries, tears but corals will fall from her eyes."

Then the third fairy said, "Whenever this girl laughs, roses will fall from her lips."³

After the fairies had left, the mother regained consciousness and was told by the old bath attendant what the fairies had said. Soon the baby cried, and some corals from her eyes. Shortly afterwards the baby laughed, and roses fell from her lips. The mother was so excited by this that she called her husband, saying, "Efendi, efendi, come quickly and see! When our daughter cries, corals fall from her eyes. When she laughs, roses fall from her lips. We shall be rich, efendi!"

They gathered the precious corals day after day, and soon they had enough wealth to build a very large house

³This is not what the third fairy said. The narrator was confused here and included a motif that appears in some other tales but is not workable in this tale. The narrator has the third fairy say, "When this girl defecates, she will drop gold." This motif is far less common than the dropping of roses from laughing lips. We made the change here because the plot motivation for the rest of this tale depends upon the girl's ability to produce roses, and nothing is ever said again about her defecating gold.

pearls, corals
& tears
All
Roses
Laughs

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themselves--a regular apartment house.⁴ The former woodcutter's wife had a very poor sister who lived in the same village, and that sister also had a small daughter. Now that were rich, the former woodcutter and his wife invited these poor relatives to come to Konya and live with them. As a result, the two little girls who were cousins grew up together.

One day the son of the padişah had a dream in which he in love with a girl named Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire. When he told this to his father, the padişah had town criers announce everywhere, "The padişah has ordered that the girl named Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire be brought to the palace." When news of this announcement reached the family of the former woodcutter, the girl's aunt said, "I shall be glad to take Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire to the padişah

The girl's parents responded, "Very well. After all, you are her aunt, and you would be an appropriate person to

⁴To rural Turkish peasants the most magnificent domicile imaginable is an apartment house. In their folktales they often quarter padişahs and even emperors in apartment houses instead of in palaces. The Turkish word for apartment house is apartman or apartıman. It is easy to confuse apartman with the Western word apartment (from which it derives), but an apartman is never a single flat.

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do that."

Before setting out for the palace, the aunt cooked some food to take along on the journey. She baked regular bread for herself and her daughter (who was to go with them) and some very salty bread for Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire

On the following morning the three set forth on their trip to the padişah's palace. After walking for some distance, they came to a mountain where they decided to stop and eat. As she had planned to do, the aunt gave regular bread to her daughter and to herself, but she gave the very salty bread to her niece. The niece became so terribly thirsty that she offered to give anything she had for a drink of water. The aunt gave her a drink of water in exchange for her eyes. The aunt then left her niece there in that desolate place at the foot of the mountain and took her own daughter to the padişah, pretending that her daughter was Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire. She said, "My padişah, here is the girl for whom you were looking."

When the son of the padişah saw that girl, he said, "All right," but he was really very upset, for the girl who had been brought to the palace did not in any way resemble

Water / Eye
2 Bl. Lenses
Abandonment
of child

Substitute
Bride
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the girl he had seen in his dream. After the usual wedding celebration, the prince was married to the cousin of Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire, but he was not at all pleased with her. In fact, he was so displeased with her that he decided to go hunting every day thereafter in order to stay away from her. He said to her mother, "Why does your daughter no longer drop roses from her lips when she laughs? That was what she did when I first saw her in my dream."

Now let me turn to Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire. Completely helpless, the girl could do nothing but cry and cry. As she cried, however, corals fell from her eyes, and after a while a small pile of them heaped up on the ground

A merchant who was passing that way decided to rest at the foot of that same mountain before he continued. As he looked around, he saw some glittering objects not very far from where he was sitting. He decided to investigate the source of this glittering, and so he walked to where the girl had been left. He discovered a blind girl sitting beside a small fortune in corals. After he had talked with her briefly, this merchant took the girl and her corals to

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his home. There the girl said to the merchant, "Father, please do one thing for me. Use some of the corals to have built for me a palace. It should be built in such a way that when any door of the palace is opened, a voice will say, 'Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire!'" The merchant did exactly what had been requested, and the girl moved into her new quarters

Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire was so pleased with this new home that one day she laughed. As soon as she did that, roses fell from her lips. Calling the merchant to her, she said, "Father, take these roses to the street before the palace and shout, 'Roses for sale! Beautiful roses for sale.' At this season of the year there are no other roses, and so the people at the palace will want to buy them. But do not sell them for money. Sell them only for a pair of eyes."

The merchant went to the street before the palace and began walking back and forth calling, "Roses for sale! I am selling beautiful roses!"

The wicked aunt wanted those roses regardless of the price. When she discovered that she could buy them only with a pair of eyes, she gave the merchant the eyes of Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire. She placed those

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roses on a table in the palace, and when the prince returned from hunting, she said to him, "You complained that my daughter did not produce roses from her lips when she laughed, but you never made her happy enough to do so. During your absence today she laughed, and these are the roses that fell from her lips." The prince smelled those roses, and at the very moment that he did so, Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire became mysteriously pregnant. The intentions of Allah are unknowable to man.

After Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire had recovered eyes, she was again able to see, but her troubles not over. Her aunt realized that she was still alive was somewhere nearby. With the aid of a witch⁵ she discovered where her niece was now living. She then sent her own daughter to remove from the arm of Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire the armband which the niece had always worn. Disguised as an old woman, the prince's wife went to

⁵In Turkish folktales the word witch has various connotations. It may be a person associated with cosmic evil. It may be a person with supernatural powers who may or may not also be a ghoul. With or without supernatural powers, it may be an old woman available for hire to undertake nefarious deeds of various kinds. In this latest capacity, she may be simply a shrewd, wily, and unscrupulous accomplice in covert action against someone.

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her cousin's palace, and when Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire was asleep, she removed the armband and took it back to the palace. As soon as the armband was removed from her arm, Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire lost consciousness and lay as if dead.⁶

*Life
then*

9-13

She was not dead, however, and her servants shook her and jostled her at mealtimes until she stirred enough to eat some food. At all other times she lay motionless and unconscious. She was still unconscious months later when she gave birth to a baby boy. The child was cared for by the servants

One day the prince was hunting in the mountains when he in the distance a palace which he had never seen before.

⁶In Turkish folktales there is a wide range of what may be called life tokens. Talismans and amulets are often much more than simple good-luck charms, for they are integrally related to the physical condition or even the life itself of a human being or other creature. Some life tokens are separable souls hidden in some secret place--a box, the stomach of a deer, the stomach of a fish--in order to protect the lives of their owners. If you can find the separable soul and destroy it, you thereby kill its owner. Sometimes, on the other hand, the life token must be kept in the possession of its owner. If it is taken away, the owner may lose consciousness or be transformed into some other form. Sometimes a life token is a gauge of a person's condition and is watched closely by its owner's friend or relative in order to keep posted on the welfare of the owner. It may be a gem which changes color if its owner is in serious trouble; it may be a knife which turns rusty for the same reason. --Although not previously mentioned, this armband is clearly a life token.

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Riding up to that palace, he saw the front door open and he heard a voice say, "Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire."

Upon hearing this, the prince was greatly confused. He said to himself, "Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire is my wife at home. Why should a voice here speak her name every time a door opens?" When the front door of the palace opened again and the voice repeated, "Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire," the prince entered the palace and looked around the first room he entered. He saw a woman lying in a bed looking as if she were dead and an infant crawling about on the floor. As he looked at the child, he was suddenly moved by a great rush of affection for it.⁷ Although he could not understand this feeling, he decided to take the child home with him in order to be assured that it would receive proper care.

When the prince arrived back at the royal palace, he said to his wife, "You are to take good care of this baby and never do anything that will cause him to cry." Leaving the child there, he went to a coffeehouse to spend some time there

⁷This subconscious affinity between blood kin is a common motif in Turkish folktales. Sometimes it is said that the blood of a person "boils" toward his/her unidentified relative.

*Affinity between
blood relatives*

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One day the prince's wife opened her trousseau chest to get something from it. It contained many different things, including the armband which had been taken from the arm of Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire. The baby was attracted to the armband and immediately grasped it tightly and would not release it. The prince's wife wrenched it out of his hands, however, put it back in the chest, and closed the lid. The baby began crying loudly, and nothing that the prince's wife or her servants could do would silence the child. He continued to cry and cry. When the prince was informed of the baby's constant crying, he went to his wife and asked, "What did you do to this child to cause him to cry? He would not cry so loudly and so steadily without cause."

"I didn't do anything to him," said the woman. But when the prince insisted on an explanation for the baby's wailing, she said, "When I opened my trousseau chest, he saw an armband inside it, and he grabbed it. When I took it from him, he began to cry in this way." The prince took the armband from the chest and gave it to the baby. It immediately grew silent. But when the prince tried to take the armband back, the child again began to cry loudly. He

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therefore allowed the baby to keep the armband. Unable to understand what had happened, the prince decided to return the child to the palace in the mountains where he had found it.

Taking in his arms the baby, who still clasped the armband tightly, the prince rode with him to the mountain castle. When the door of the palace opened and the voice said, "Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire," the prince entered the palace again and placed the baby on the floor near the bed of the woman who seemed to be dead. When the baby crawled to the bed and touched the woman with the armband he was holding, the woman suddenly regained consciousness. She sat up and said, "I am Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire." She then told the son of the padişah everything that I have told you so far in this tale.⁸

When the prince had heard her whole story, he took Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire and their baby to the royal palace. His father, the padişah, called his viziers

⁸This may be a latter-day truncation. Traditionally, folk audiences enjoy full-scale repetition of such a story, partly because they want the narration to last longer, partly because they are by then sufficiently acquainted with the account so that, as it were, they can participate psychologically in the retelling.

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together so that they could all hear Beauty Who Does Not Attain Her Desire tell her whole story to them too. After they had listened to her account from beginning to end, they called the false bride and her mother to their presence. The two women were tied to the tail of a mule, and when the mule was driven off, the false wife and her wicked mother were dragged to their deaths.

A wedding celebration was begun soon after that, a celebration that lasted for forty days and forty nights. At the end of that time the son of the padişah was at last married to his true bride

Spent
Wedding celebration