

Story #104 (Tape 1961-1962)

Narrator: Aşır Çatal, shepherd

Location: Village of Çamalan, kaza of Tarsus, Province of İçel; the collecting was done outside the village proper in the pasture.

Date: March 1962

The Immoral Vezir and the Daughter of the Padişah

There was once a padişah who wanted to go to Mecca on pilgrimage and asked his grand vezir to preside over the council of vezirs and take care of his daughter while he was away. Leaving his affairs in the hands of the grand vezir, the padişah left for Mecca on horseback.

After the padişah had gone, the grand vezir called at the palace, and it was clear from his behavior that he was interested in seducing the padişah's daughter. The padişah's daughter suspected the grand vezir's intentions and said to him, "Stay away from this palace while my father is gone!"

Quite disappointed with this treatment, the grand vezir went and hired a witch and told her to try to make it possible for him to seduce the girl. The witch went to the palace one day and saw the padişah's daughter, but she said to the witch, "Stay away from here," and she gave orders to the palace guards to admit to the palace no one but maid until her father returned from Mecca. She asked the grand vezir to come to the palace one day and said to him, "My father entrusted me and his state affairs to you. Why have you betrayed him? I shall tell my father everything when he returns."

Eight hours before the arrival of the padişah, the grand vezir left the capital to meet him on the way and welcome him. When they met, the

grand vezir kissed the padişah's hand and paid him his respects. When the padişah asked the grand vezir about his daughter, the grand vezir hesitated and said, "There is nothing worthy of mention, your majesty," and he tilted his head to one side in the usual sign of humility.*

When the padişah insisted that he give a report on his daughter and other affairs, the grand vezir said, "Your majesty, I could not stop your daughter from having several undesirable relations with various young men.

False Accusation

When the padişah heard this, he was very angry and said to his vezir, "Why did you not use your authority and do as I told you? Go at once and deliver my daughter to the executioner and have her head cut off."

The vezir left the padişah and returned to the palace. He told the padişah's daughter that he came with the orders of her father to deliver her to the executioner and asked her to come with him. The padişah's daughter refused to go with the grand vezir and said, "I am not going anywhere before my father reaches the palace

Shortly afterwards, the padişah arrived at the palace and delivered his daughter to the executioner without even questioning her, and he told them to send her blood-stained dress to him when they had killed her. The padişah's daughter kept asking, "What have I done? What is my crime?" But no one listened to her, and she was carried away.

Bloody evidence

The executioners were aware of what had gone on in the palace. They knew that the grand vezir had accused the girl of an offense she had not committed, so they did not want to kill her. Instead, they found a puppy and killed it and then dipped her dress in the blood and sent it to her father. They told the girl to leave the country.

After being released by the executioners, the padişah's daughter

*"My neck is thinner than hair, your majesty" = saying of humility. Straight neck = sign of pride, stubbornness; one bends one's neck to show humility.

walked many days through the forests and finally reached a Yürük tent where she was accepted as a guest by the old man and his family. This family had four goats with the milk of which they fed themselves. The old man had a grown-up son, and he asked the padişah's daughter if she would marry him. She said, "I shall marry your son on the condition that I be the one who names my child." This condition was accepted, and they were married.

Two years later, a son was born to them, and his mother named him What-have-we-become? Another year passed and they had another son whom she named What-shall-we-become? Another year passed and a third son was born to them and he was named What-shall-we-inherit?

One day the padişah and the grand vezir left the palace on a journey disguised as dervishes. They reached at last the Yürük tent where the padişah's daughter was now living, and they stayed in the Yürük's tent as guests. The padişah's daughter was about to make bread.

[The tale to this point was recorded on tape, when we discovered that we had no more empty reels. Subsequently, after returning to Ankara, Ahmet Uysal wrote to the local schoolteacher requesting him to collect the remainder of the tale, write it down, and send it to him. This ^{the} teacher did, and so the remainder of the tale was never taped.]

The girl was baking bread. She made four bazlamas [flat pieces of dough baked on a hot plate called saç]. She put two of these in front of the guests, and they ate them with milk. The padişah asked, "Are these four goats all you have in the world?"

The old man said, "Yes."

"Then I shall give you a piece of paper with which you can procure

some wheat," said the padişah.

The padişah returned home in a very thoughtful mood. His wife noticed this and asked him, "Why are you thinking so deeply, Majesty?"

"Why should I not think so deeply? I saw a girl among the nomads who looked very much like my daughter," answered the padişah.

"Well, why did you not bring her here? She could have lived in the palace and served us."

The old man found his way to the palace the next day. He took out the paper from his pocket and showed it to the servants. They took him upstairs, where he saw that the dervish who stayed in his tent was nobody but the padişah. The padişah had the old man seated, and told him that he was going to have him settled somewhere in the palace. He gave the old man food to eat, and while he was eating, he sent his men to move the old man's tent to the palace.

The tent and its occupants were brought to the palace and put in the garden. The padişah invited the girl, who was very much like his own daughter, to work in the palace. The padişah's wife said, "The clothes of my dead daughter are in the chest; take them out and wear them." The girl opened the chest, took out her own clothes, and put them on.

After dinner, the padişah asked, "Whose daughter are you, my girl?"

"You will call the vezir and the witch woman and find out from them who I am, and nobody is to leave the room when I am talking," said the girl. The padişah had the vezir and the witch called. The girl began to tell her story: "There was once a padişah who was preparing to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca. He entrusted his daughter to

his grand vezir before he left. After the padişah had left for Mecca the grand vezir wanted to make love to his daughter. The girl resisted the grand vezir's advances and told him not to come to her house any more. Upon this, the vezir found a witch to help him in his efforts to seduce the girl. But the girl turned the witch out of her house, too.

"When the vezir went out to welcome the padişah on his return from Mecca, the padişah asked him, 'Is everything all right at home?' vezir began to stutter and make strange gestures. The padişah repeated his question: 'What is the matter? What happened? Has something happened at home?' The vezir replied, 'Your daughter would not listen to my advice. She has gone to bad ways.' When the padişah heard this, he ordered, 'Go and call the executioner, and let my daughter be beheaded. The executioner came and took the padişah's daughter away to cut head off somewhere along the banks of the river, but instead of killing her he let her go, and brought to the padişah her shirt dipped in the blood of a puppy which he killed instead. (This tale goes on like this, in a manner exactly identical with the incidents which have already taken place.)"*

Upon this, the padişah had the vezir put to death immediately. He had his brother-in-law appointed as the grand vezir. They began to live as happily as before. They have got what they wished, and let us climb up the Mountain of Kaf. [One of the common forms of ending for Turkish folktales.

*This has been truncated by the teacher who collected the second half of the tale, or perhaps by Ahmet Uysal in typing it up.