

Story #233 (Tape #9, 1961-62)

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Location: Ankara

Date: December 1961

The Step-Daughter and the Forty Thieves

Tak

Once there was and once there was not a girl who had a father and a ^{daughter} ~~step-~~ mother. The stepmother asked the father to get rid of this girl. The father one day said, "Come, daughter, let us go." The girl and her father started, and they went until they reached the top of a hill. The girl had put her things together in a bundle, and the father took the bundle off her head and he rolled it down the side of the hill. "Go wherever the bundle goes," he told his daughter.

And the bundle rolled down the hill until finally it came to rest at the house of ⁸⁶⁻⁸⁸ ~~forty thieves~~. She followed the bundle, going where it went. When she arrived at the house of the forty thieves, she found everything in abundance. She looked all around, and then she said, "All right, let me make a huge kettle full of soup." And then she made the same quantity of macaroni, and plenty of fresh bread. She tidied all around, and then she slapped herself on the cheek ^{transformation} and she became a broom.

When the forty thieves came home, they found their table all set and their food all cooked, and they were surprised. They said, "What good person is doing this for us?"

After this had gone on for several days, the eldest of the forty thieves decided to stay home and find out who this person was. He stayed, and waited and waited, but finally he became so sleepy that he could not keep his eyes open any longer, and he fell asleep. The girl came out again and she cooked

and tidied and set the table and washed herself. Then she slapped herself on the cheek and became a broom again.

After she had become a broom, the eldest brother woke up and he found out that everything had been done again as before. There was a great kettle of soup prepared, and the same quantity of macaroni, and plenty of fresh bread, and the house was tidied all around. But he could not find out who had done it. And when the rest of the forty thieves came home, they said, "What have you seen? Who was it?"

But he said he had fallen asleep and he had not seen anyone

"Oh!" they said. "You could not do it."

And the next one said, "I shall try."

And they said, "If the eldest of us could not do it, you certainly cannot."

But he said that he would. He would see to it that he would find out.

And he stayed behind when everyone else had gone, but at last he also felt sleepy, and he fell asleep. The girl came out and she cooked and cleaned and tidied, and washed herself and made herself clean. Then she slapped herself on the cheek and became a broom again.

When the second one of the forty thieves awoke, he found that everything had been done again as before. There was a great kettle of soup prepared, and the same quantity of macaroni, and plenty of fresh bread, and the house was tidied all around. But he could not find out who had done it. And when the rest of the forty thieves came home, they said, "What have you seen? Who was it?"

But he said he had fallen asleep and he had not seen anyone.

Well, the youngest of the forty thieves said, "I shall do it." And in spite of their opposition, he insisted that he could watch faithfully to find out who it was that was helping them.

So he stayed behind when everyone else had gone to work, and he tried hard not to fall asleep, and sure enough, he did not fall asleep, but he pretended that he was.

The girl came out and cooked and cleaned and tidied and set the table and washed herself, making herself clean. When she was ready to slap herself on the cheek and become a broom again, the youngest thief jumped up and caught her

He held her hand and said, "I saw what you did. It is all right. You become our sister and you will live with us."

When the rest of the thieves came home, they all felt very happy, and they ate and drank, and they gave her forty strands of gold. She became their sister.

When her brothers, the forty thieves, had gone to work one day, there came a ^{ss-91} witch. And this witch said, "Open the door, my lass. I have to come inside and kneel to pray. Will you not let me come in?"

"No," said the girl. "I will not let anyone in. I have forty brothers. If they come and find you here, they will make you as if you never were." And she refused to open the door.

The witch begged and begged, and still she would not open the door. Finally the witch said, "By the way, your stepmother sent you a ring, and she wanted me to give it to you."

"No," said the girl. "I do not want it."

The witch said, "You do not need to let me in. Just stick your finger out through the keyhole and I shall slip the ring on it."

As soon as the ring had been slipped on the girl's finger, she fell dead. And when the forty thieves came home, she was nowhere to be seen.

They said, "Open the door, sister!

And she did not open the door.

They shouted, "Open the door, sister!"

And nobody opened the door.

So they went to the window and broke the glass and came into the house. What they found was the girl all dead on the floor. Oh, they knelt and cried and cried.

Finally they built a box and padded it with cotton and lined it with cloth. Then they washed her and laid her in the box. They tied this box on a camel and let the camel go.

The camel went and went and went, and finally it came to a fountain in front of a palace to drink some water. While the camel was drinking water at the fountain, the padişah's son saw the camel and went to see what was in the box. When he saw what was in the box, he untied the box and took it to his own room. Then he said to his mother, "Look, Mother, the forty keys to the forty other rooms of the palace are yours, but the forty-first is mine. If you dare to go into the forty-first room, I shall see to it that it will be the end of me." And everyone else also was forbidden to enter his room.

One day when her son was away, the mother was very curious, and she wanted to see what was in the room. But all she saw was a dead girl in a box. She became very angry. She brought some women in to wash the girl and get her ready for a decent burial. And they washed her and washed her with hot water and with soap. While the girl's hand was being washed, the ring slipped off her finger with the soapy water. As soon as the ring was off her finger, she opened her eyes and said, "Oh, how long I have slept!"

Abblution, ritual
Death resurrection fairy

When the padişah's son came back, he and the girl got married. They had a long wedding, for forty days and forty nights. And they lived happily together.

After a period of time, she gave birth to a baby. While she was still in bed, the stepmother heard all about this and was filled with anger, because she had wanted to have her stepdaughter dead.

She came to see her, saying, "I want to take care of you. Let me stay. You are sick." One day when she was ^{tending} the girl, she stuck a needle into her, and the girl became a bird ^{transformation} and flew away. After the girl had flown away, the stepmother got into bed beside the baby.

When the padişah's son came in, she said crossly, "To the other woman you used to come once a day. Why do you come only once a year to me?"

And the padişah's son wondered, "What sort of talk is this? What does she mean by that?"

There was a big garden next to the palace, and every morning this girl who had become a bird began to come to this garden and to call to the gardener,

"Hoo, hoo, gardener!"

^{Bird - garden house}
And, "Hoo, hoo!" the gardener would answer.

"Is my husband asleep?"

"Yes, he is asleep."

"Is my little princess sleeping?"

"Yes, your little princess is sleeping."

"Let that witch of a stepmother of mine sleep and never wake! And let the branch that I am standing on wither away." And then she would fly away.

She was a very beautiful bird, but whatever branch she stepped on would wither away and die. And as one after another the trees in that beautiful garden withered and died, the padişah's son asked the gardener what was causing it.

^{Bird stepped on which kills tree on which it alights.}

The gardener told him the story. "There is a beautiful bird that comes to our garden every morning and says, 'Hoo, hoo, gardener!' And when I answer, 'Hoo, hoo!' the bird says, 'Is my husband asleep?' 'Yes, your husband is asleep,' I answer. 'Is my little princess sleeping?' the bird asks. 'Yes, your little princess is sleeping,' I answer. Then the bird sings, 'Let that witch

of a stepmother of mine sleep and never wake! And let the branch that I am standing on wither away.' And after that, whichever branch of the tree the bird has stepped on withers and dies. Let us watch together some morning and you can see the bird," said the gardener

So the padişah's son and the gardener slept in the garden one night. Early in the morning there came the beautiful bird again, and she and the gardener talked to each other in the same way they had those other mornings.

hoo, gardener!"

hoo!"

"Is my husband asleep?"

"Yes, he is asleep."

"Is my little princess sleeping?"

your little princess is sleeping.

"Let that witch of a stepmother of mine sleep and never wake! And let the branch that I am standing on wither away." And then the bird flew away.

The padişah's son wanted to catch this beautiful bird, so they decided to put pitch on the branches of the trees. Early the next morning the bird came again.

"Hoo, hoo, gardener!"

"Hoo, hoo!"

"Is my husband asleep?"

"Yes, he is asleep."

"Is my little princess sleeping?"

"Yes, your little princess is sleeping,"

"Let that witch of a stepmother of mine sleep and never wake! And let the branch that I am standing on wither away." But when she was ready to fly away,

her wings and her legs were caught by the pitch. They caught the bird and they began to caress it. As they were stroking its feathers, they saw that a needle was driven into the skin of the bird. They took the needle out, and as soon as the needle had been taken out she became human again, her own self. "Oh, how long I have slept!" she said

For joy, they were married all over again, with a wedding that lasted forty days and forty nights. The stepmother was sent away, and the rest of them lived happily ever after