

Story 714 (1970 Tape 13)

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Province

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The Black-Haired Beloved

There was once a padişah who had a single child, a son. In order to protect this boy, his parents kept him in a golden cage. They used to take him outdoors on sunny days, setting his golden cage before their house beside the street, and then later they would carry the cage inside again. One day an old woman (like me) was passing along the street carrying two pitchers full of water. Taking up one of the two golden balls with which he played, the boy threw one of them at the old woman and broke one of her pitchers.

She said, "Alas! You are the padişah's only son, and so what can I say to you? I shall say this: I hope that you may suffer from passion for Zülfisiyah."<sup>1</sup> When the boy heard the word Zülfisiyah, he did not understand what it meant. He had never heard such a name before

*Curse*

The next day the old woman went to the fountain for

<sup>1</sup>Although the narrator consistently pronounces it Zülfisiyah, the correct form is Zülüfüsiyah--zülüf meaning lock of hair, and siyah meaning black. The word is almost always applied to the hair of one's beloved.

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water with a single pitcher. Again the boy threw a golden ball at her, and he broke that second pitcher too. Again she said, "O boy! May you suffer from black love."<sup>2</sup> Later when he broke a third pitcher of hers, the old woman cursed him a third time

The boy began wondering what Zūlfisiya was. He kept thinking and thinking about this until he grew ill from worry. Doctors were called in to examine him, and these doctors reported to the padişah, "Your Majesty, your son is suffering from black love [love melancholy

"For whom does he have such love? He has never seen anyone for whom he could have any passion. What sort of melancholy love is this?"

"Your Majesty, if you will but hide yourself somewhere in this room and listen to what he says to himself when he thinks he is alone, you will discover the cause of his sickness."

The padişah said, "Oh, he is really suffering from

<sup>2</sup>The narrator says kara sevda. Kara means black, and sevda means passionate and hopeless love that produces melancholy similar to the love-induced melancholy illustrated in the characters of Shakespeare and his Elizabethan contemporaries. In this tale the padişah's son has become infatuated and obsessed with the image of a black-haired woman whom he has not seen.

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Zülfisiyah!" But nobody seemed to understand just exactly what Zülfisiyah was

When the padişah's son grew older and became a young man, he said one day to his parents, "I am going to go in search of Zülfisiyah!" They did not wish to let him go, but they finally consented, thinking that he would probably return by the time he had completed only half the search. So the young man set out on his journey, traveling a great distance. He traveled little, he traveled much, and when he looked back, he saw that he had gone a distance no greater than the length of a needle.<sup>3</sup>

Soon after that, he entered another country. Looking around there, he realized that he had come into a land of giants. He saw a giant sitting before an oven preparing bread dough to be baked. Uncertain as to whether this giant was male or female, he crept closer. When he saw that the giant had breasts thrown back over the shoulder, he realized that this was a female giant. He ran to her from behind and started sucking at once on her breasts.

<sup>3</sup>This is a formulaic expression to summarize extensive travel. It is sometimes elaborated further for humorous purposes: He went little, he went much. He traveled straight over rivers and mountains. He went for six months and a summer [or autumn], but when he looked back, he saw that he had gone only as far as the length of a grain of barley.

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*Milk siblings*

The giantess said, "If you had not sucked my breasts, I would have eaten you, but now that you have done that, you are my milk son,<sup>4</sup> and I cannot harm you. Soon my giant son will be coming home, and so I must hide you from him." Saying this, she slapped him once, turning him into an apple, and placed him on a shelf.

*Transposition 129, 131, 132*

As soon as her son arrived home, he began sniffing around and saying, "I smell the flesh of a son of Adam here."

"Son, do not call him a child of Adam," she said. "He is your milk brother now. If you will swear that you will not harm him, I will show him to you."

The giant son said, "No, I shall not harm him." When the giantess slapped the apple again and turned it back into a man, the giant son started playing with his little human brother, tossing him up in the air and caressing him.

"What are you seeking here, my brother?" he asked.

"I am searching for Zülfisiyah," said the young man.

Thinking about this for a moment, the giant said, "We

<sup>4</sup>If anyone sucks the breast of a woman not his own mother, then he gains a second mother, a milk mother. Her children become his milk siblings. Thereafter, his newly acquired milk relatives will aid and protect him as much as they would a blood relative in their own family. Some peasant women temporarily trade babies momentarily at nursing time in order to afford each of them this added protection. This act also draws the two families closer together, giving them almost a clan-like alliance.

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have not heard of anything like that. But if there is anyone at all who knows about it, it would be my aunt, who lives a great distance from here. I do not know about this thing, but she may well know. In the morning I shall you off to her home. There you should first do to her what you have already done to my mother."

This giant brother was named Mountain Destroyer. When he was seeing off the son of the padişah the next morning, the young man said to this giant, "Brother, here is my handkerchief. If you should ever see blood dripping from it, know by that sign that I am in serious trouble."<sup>5</sup> The giant hung the handkerchief on the wall and then finished seeing off the young man.

The son of the padişah then went to the home of the aunt of his giant brother. She was firing an oven in paration for baking bread. Running up behind her, he embraced her and sucked her breasts.

She said to him, "If you had not sucked my breasts and thus become my milk son, I should have eaten you. My giant son, named Ocean Sucker, will soon come home. What

<sup>5</sup>The handkerchief is a life token. It is intimately connected with the life of a person and reflects the condition of that person, just as his talisman (protecting object) or externalized soul does.

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shall I do with you?"

When Ocean Sucker arrived home, he kept saying,  
"Mother, I smell here the flesh of a son of Adam.

She said, "Son, he has become my milk son by sucking my breast. He is now your milk brother, and if you will swear not to eat him, I shall bring him out where you can see him." She had turned the young man into a pitcher. Now she slapped the pitcher and turned it back into a human being.

The giant began caressing and playing with his little brother. He asked him, "Why did you ever come here?"

"I came here searching for Zülfisiyah."

"We have never heard of such a name. Our oldest aunt lives a great distance from here. Perhaps either she or her son will know about this."

Before leaving the next morning, the son of the padişah said to Ocean Sucker, "Here is my arm band. If I should ever be in very serious trouble, this arm band will drip blood."<sup>6</sup> The giant hung this arm band on the wall.

When the son of the padişah reached the oldest aunt of the giants, he did to her what he had done to the two previous giantesses. She was firing an oven in which to

<sup>6</sup>This is another life token.

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bake bread. Slipping up behind her, he sucked her breasts without her first seeing him.

"It is a good thing for you that you did that," she said, "for if you had not, I should have eaten you. Very soon my son, who is named Wind and Hurricane, will come home. What shall I do with you?" Saying this, she slapped him once and turned him into a drinking glass.

When Wind and Hurricane arrived home, he said several times, "Mother, I keep smelling the flesh of a son of Adam Where is he?"

"Son, he is no longer a son of Adam, for he sucked my breast and became your milk brother. If you will swear not to harm him, I shall show him to you." After he had sworn not to harm his milk brother, the giantess slapped the drinking glass and turned it back into the son of the padişah.

The giant began playing with his little brother and caressing him. Then he asked his little brother, "Why did you come here?"

"I have come all this distance in search of Zülfisiyah

The giant then said to him, "Oh, my brother, Zülfisiyah is a girl who lives on an island in the middle of such-and-such a sea. It is very difficult to see her, for she lives in a tower on that island and never comes

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out of it. In the morning I shall see you off and tell you exactly how to go there."

As he was leaving the next morning the young man received careful instructions about the route to follow in seeking Zülfisiyah. Following these directions carefully, the son of the padişah went and found that very sea. He searched that sea until he found the right island, and at last came to the tower in which the girl lived

She had not yet seen him as he stood before the tower. She was combing her hair, and occasionally a hair fell from her head into the sea below. The young man sang:

I have wandered the earth and traced you here--

My Zülfisiyah, now let me come in.

When Zülfisiyah heard this, she drew her curtain and said, "Oh, some son of Adam has come here!"

The young man sang again:

Don't draw the curtain across your face

And cover those eyebrows dyed so black!<sup>7</sup>

I have wandered the earth and traced you here--

<sup>7</sup>The narrator referred to the eyebrow dye as kudret, a word which means power or might. Upon questioning, she said that she did not remember what the word meant. One can hazard a guess that she had vaguely recalled a form of the verb kudurmak, meaning to make something wild or uncontrollable. Eye make-up is often thought to give a woman an alluring or vampish look.

Song --  
Meneşle  
vnu



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My Zülfisiyah, now let me come in

To this the girl responded:

I have drawn the curtain across my face

And covered my eyebrows dyed so black.

But since you have traveled and traced me here

My welcome I grant, O my padişah!

The girl lowered a small boat, and in this she drew him up to the top of the tower. After the two of them had talked for a while, the son of the padişah said, "Zülfisiyah, let us go down and walk about in that garden at the foot of this tower

"My padişah," she said, "I cannot go away and leave this tower. You are a son of Adam and may do so. You go take a walk and come back."

"I could not stand being away from you," he said.

"I shall give you a lock of my hair to take with you. If you miss me, you can take it out and look at it. But take care not to lose my hair.

she gave him a lock of her hair, he tied it carefully to a part of his clothing. Descending to the garden below, he proceeded to walk about in it. Whenever he began to miss the girl, he took out the lock of her hair and gazed at it. After wandering about in this way for some time and gazing occasionally at her hair, he at last

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decided to return to the tower. As he went to take one more look at the hair, however, the wind pulled the lock out of his hand and carried it away.

This lock of hair blew a great distance in the wind and landed in a cabbage patch where it coiled itself within the leaves of a head of cabbage. Who knows how long that lock of hair was? When that cabbage was taken to market, someone bought it, took it home, and there discovered the hair. No one was able to determine what kind of hair it was, and so it was taken to the padişah of that land.

The padişah assembled all of the old men of his kingdom, hoping to find among them someone who would know where that lock of hair might have come from. It was shown to many people before anyone could identify it. Finally, an old woman looked at it and said, "This is the hair of Zülfisiyah, a girl who lives in a tower on an island in such-and-such a sea.

"Can you bring her here?" asked the padişah.

"Yes, I could if you would have constructed for me a balloon<sup>8</sup> with which I could fly to that island." When

<sup>8</sup>This outrageous anachronism may possibly result from the narrator's failure of memory. How could the old woman reach such a distant and all-but-inaccessible place? It may possibly be her attempt to make the tale more realistic. Unlikely as the balloon is here, it is no more unlikely than having her travel on a broomstick or a magic carpet.

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the balloon was built, the old woman climbed into it, lighted it,<sup>9</sup> and flew away in it. Some time later she landed in the girl's garden, where she hid the balloon, and then she herself started rolling about on the ground.<sup>10</sup>

On that same day the son of the padişah said to Zülfisiyah, "Come, let us go down into the garden."

"You will have to go alone," she said. "I cannot leave this tower to accompany you."

"Well, if you cannot go, that is all right, but at least give me a lock of your hair to take along with me."

"No, I cannot do that, either. The last time you went down there I gave you a lock of my hair, and you lost it. This may bring great trouble upon me. You just go ahead and stroll about in the garden."

The young man descended for that purpose. As he was walking about aimlessly, he came upon the old woman rolling around on the ground. He asked her, "How did you manage to get here, grandmother?" He had no fear of her, for she was obviously one of his own kind.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup>The narrator says literally that the old woman "gave it the wick." She (the narrator) apparently understood the principle of hot-air ballooning.

<sup>10</sup>This is a conventional metaphor to represent desperation.

<sup>11</sup>That is to say, a human being

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"Oh, son, a storm carried me here, throwing me upon this island. I have been left alone here. Please take me in as your guest, son."

Although the son of the padişah was afraid that Zülfisiyah might not like this, he consented, saying, "All right, come along with me." When he returned to the tower, he said to Zülfisiyah, "See whom I have brought."

But Zülfisiyah said, "I do not want any of Adam's kind here except you."

The young man tried to persuade her to permit the old woman to remain with them, saying, "Please! She is a poor and lonely old woman with no one to look after her." Finally they agreed that the old woman could stay, but only on the ground level of the tower.

One day, however, the old woman moved part way upstairs in the tower, to a point where she could visit with the girl and influence her. She said, "Zülfisiyah, my girl, you must surely realize that your prince does not really love you."

"Oh, yes, he does! Would he have come such a great distance if he had not loved me?"

"If he had really loved you, he would have told you about his talisman. Has he ever told you what his talisman is?"

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"No--but what is a talisman?" (The girl had no idea of what a talisman was.)

"There is some object that controls his life. That is his talisman. You had better find out what it is."

"How can I find out from him what his talisman is?"

The old woman said, "Wrap your head in cloth this evening and pretend that you are ill. When your man asks, 'What is the matter, Zülfisiyah?' you answer, 'You have never told me what your talisman is. That is why I am ill."

When the young man returned from the garden that evening, he saw that the girl had her head wrapped. He said, "Zülfisiyah, why do you have your head wrapped? And why do you kiss me so differently?"

"Well, I am hurt because you have never told me about your talisman. That is what has made me ill."

"What would you do with my talisman?" the young man asked. After they had talked further about it, he said, "Well, my tobacco case is my talisman."

As soon as she had the opportunity, Zülfisiyah went straight to the old woman and reported, "His talisman is his tobacco case, grandmother." That night while the young man and Zülfisiyah slept, the old woman crept upstairs to their room and stole the tobacco case. She

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then took it downstairs and threw it into the sea.

In the morning the young man arose but did not notice anything unusual. After he had gone out, the old woman again said to Zülfisiyah, "No, your man does not really love you."

yes, he loves me very much."

"No, he doesn't. If he did, he would tell you what his talisman is."

"He did tell me! It is his tobacco case."

"He may say that, but it is not really his talisman."

That evening Zülfisiyah again bound her head and pretended to be ill. When her man came in and asked her what was the matter, she said, "I am ill because you never told me what your talisman is."

The young man asked, "Zülfisiyah, what is it that you want to do with my talisman?" (You [the audience] will remember that the dervish had told him that his bowstring was his talisman.) After some discussion about this, the son of the padişah said, "My talisman is my cigarette holder.

Learning of this, the old woman again entered their room at night, and this time she stole the cigarette holder and threw it too into the sea. Still nothing happened to the young man. The old woman, therefore, said once again

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to Zülfisiyah, "No, it is certain that your man does not really love you. He never tells you the truth about his talisman. The cigarette holder is not his talisman at all."

evening Zülfisiyah pretended to be very cross. She said to the young man, "You do not really love me, for if you did, you would tell me truthfully what your talisman really is."

"What do you want with my talisman? Why do you care so much about it? Why don't you say that it is that old woman who wants it? Throw that old woman into the sea and get rid of her!" But after a while he said to Zülfisiyah, "My talisman is my bowstring."

That night the old woman went upstairs to their room and searched for the bowstring. Although the son of the padişah had removed it from his bow and put it into his pocket to protect it, it was finally discovered and removed by the old woman. She took it and threw it into the sea

In the morning the son of the padişah could not be awakened. Zülfisiyah kept coming to him and gazing helplessly at him, but he did not awaken. She said to the old woman, "Something has happened to my man. He cannot be awakened."

"Never mind that, my girl. He will get up all right. It is just that he is sleeping very heavily now. Let us



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go walk in the garden, and he will wake up by himself

At this same time drops of blood began to ooze from the handkerchief, the arm band, and the other thing which the son of the padişah had left with the three giants

[Ahmet Uysal: "What was the third thing that he left with the giants?"

Zekiye Kuş: "I cannot remember what it was, but it was something." ]<sup>12</sup>

All three of these things began to ooze drops of blood.

[Zekiye Kuş: "It was a ring! That's what the third thing was--a ring! That was what he had given to the third giant.¶]

Now the young man's big brothers, the giants, looked at these three objects dripping with blood and knew from that sign that their little brother was in some kind of serious trouble. The three met together and decided that they would go to his assistance.

Now let us return to the island to see what the old woman was doing. You remember that when she had first come there, she had hidden her balloon in the garden. Now she was trying to lead the girl to the place where she had

<sup>12</sup>The narrator not only forgot the third object here but also in the original situation. She had not mentioned the young man's having given anything to the third giant. Too, the bowstring named here as the talisman was not mentioned in this tale but in the preceding one, where it was subsequently ignored.

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hidden it.<sup>13</sup> She said, "Look, my girl, there is something there. My eyes no longer see very well. You look at it and tell me what is is." But as she was examining it, the girl was suddenly shoved into the balloon by the old woman. She herself jumped aboard and fired it.

Ahmet Uysal: "Could this balloon be a küp?"<sup>14</sup>

Zekiye Kuş: "Something like a balloon and something like a küp."

Ahmet Uysal: "What do you mean by saying that she 'fired it'?"

Zekiye Kuş: "Well, in order to get steam to make it go, there had to be a fire in it."]

The old woman guided the balloon straight to the palace of the padişah of her land. (You remember that we left the padişah looking at the lock of Zülfisiyah's hair.) She landed the balloon right on the roof of the padişah's palace. When Zülfisiyah was taken down into the palace, she ordered that the windows of her room be covered with black curtains. "I have forty days of mourning to observe," she said.

<sup>13</sup>Nothing is said here about the girl's inability to leave the tower.

<sup>14</sup>A küp is a very large vase, like an ancient amphora, in which oil, water, or other liquid is stored in the Middle East. A witch in Turkey always rides a küp, not a broomstick. This is the reason for Ahmet Uysal's question.

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Now let us go and see what the giants are doing. When they arrived at the tower on the island, they searched his room and his clothing for his bowstring. One of them observed, "His bowstring is missing." Then to the middle giant he said, "Come on, Ocean Sucker, do your work and find that bowstring!" Ocean Sucker sucked up the sea before them and drew from it the tobacco case, the cigarette holder, and the bowstring.

When they placed these objects before the young man, he began to stir and half awaken from his deep sleep. When he finally came completely to himself, he asked, "Where is Zülfisiyah?"

The giants said, "We have seen nothing whatsoever of Zülfisiyah."

"Where is the old woman?"

"We have seen no old woman," they said

The giants then took the son of the padişah to their land to the home of the youngest of them. They all spent the night there, and in the morning, the giants saw their little brother off, saying, "Farewell, brother!" Setting out at once, the son of the padişah traveled many days and eventually reached a city where a padişah dwelt. He noticed immediately that everyone was wearing black clothes and was covered with black. Anyone not wearing black could be

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detected at once.

"Why are you wearing black here?" he asked.

"Because the Most Beautiful Girl in the World lives here, and she is in mourning." It was in this way that he learned that Zülfisiyah was now in that place.

That night he went to the padişah's palace and stood beneath the room in which Zülfisiyah lived. He could not see her through the dark curtains, but nevertheless he knew that she was there. He sang to her:

A jasmine stick within your hand,

A new bride you must be.

But mount my horse and let us flee!

Zülfisiyah, now fly with me!

Opening her curtains, Zülfisiyah sang in response:

A jasmine stick within my hand,

I'm no new bride today;

end my mourning when you say,

"Now mount, my love, and fly away!"

He then threw a rope up to the girl, and with this she lowered herself from her window of the palace. Silently they fled together.

Well, they had all of their wishes fulfilled, and may all of us be as lucky as they were!

*Say -  
corner  
nugget*

*Tab -  
Jannet  
dove*