

Story 1350 (1969 Tape 5)

Narrator: Unidentified male

Location: Çanakçı village,
Şiran kaza, Gümüş-
hane Province

Date: August 1969

Collected by Dr. Saim Sakaoğlu

The Persecuted Youngest Sister *For "Not a wife"*

Wealth goes to those who work the hardest;
Flocks are controlled by those who herd them;
The jug is his who visits the vineyard
That's how things go, and that is life ¹

There were once a man and wife who had three daughters
After the wife became ill and died, the man married again,
and in that way the girls came to have a stepmother.
stepmother did not like her stepdaughters, and one day s¹
said to their father, "Oh, Husband, do something to make
your daughters disappear from my sight."

"Alas, Wife, how could I do such a thing?" But the
woman meant what she said, and she was determined to have
her wish carried out. Helpless in this situation, the man
one morning called his daughters together and said, "Girls,

¹This moralistic verse is atypical of introductions to
Turkish tales. The conventional beginning is a nonsensical
jingle known as a tekerleme.

Story 1350

us go to the forest and cut some wood today." So they started for the forest, the man carrying an axe and the girls carrying ropes with which to tie the cut wood into bundles.

When they reached the forest, the man cut wood into short lengths, and the girls began to stack these together

tie them up in bundles of the right size to be carried After a while the girls grew thirsty, and they said to the

"Father, we are very thirsty. Where can we find some water to drink?"

The man said, "You will go along yonder path, turning this way and that way, and then you will come to a fountain beneath a large tree. I shall finish cutting the wood while are gone

"But, Father, how shall we be able to find you when we return?"

"As I move along cutting wood, I shall keep hanging my pipe on one pine tree after another, and it will keep making a tak, tak sound as the wind swings it against these trees. Listen for the tak, tak and you will know where I am."

"All right," said the girls, and they went and found the fountain in order to drink some water. As soon as they

Story 1350

*Abandoned
children* 7

had left, their father took his axe and went home. After the girls had had enough to drink, they returned to the place where they could hear their father's pipe going tak, tak against the pine tree. When they reached that tree, they saw his pipe hanging there, but their father himself had disappeared. Realizing that they had been left behind in the forest, they began to cry and say over and over again

"The father who leaves just a tak, tak sound

Is the father who rids himself of daughters."

After they had cried and cried for some time, they decided to try to find their way out of the forest. Not knowing which way to go, they selected one of the paths in the forest and began following it to wherever it might lead them. Toward the end of the day they emerged from the forest and came upon an open plain. At just about the time the evening call to prayer² they came upon a large flat stone that was like a trapdoor in the ground. Lifting

²There are two Moslem prayers that take place during what most people would call evening: Yatsi, which occurs at sunset, and Akşam, which comes a couple of hours later. The word akşam means evening, and so if the reference here is taken literally as the Akşam Prayer, the plain would be dark. Since they are able to see the trapdoor and see their way down the stairs, the prayer service referred to passingly may have been the earlier Yatsi.

Story 1350

up this stone, they saw that beneath it was a long stairway leading down into the earth. When they reached the bottom of this stairway, they found a table set with many plates of different foods--all the way from bread to dessert--but there was no one there, neither human being nor jinn.³

f^m /The narrator has clearly lost control of the story at this point. Judging from what follows, one may conclude that the subterranean crypt was the cellar of a house which the girls

not seen in the fading light.] After they had returned to the surface of the plain, they heard a flock of sheep approaching, and when it got close enough, they could see that the sheep were being led by a shepherd who was a monkey. The girls were very much afraid of this monkey, and so they quickly hid from his sight. The monkey put the sheep in a shed and he himself entered the house, but the girls slept outside in hiding that night. After the monkey had departed with the sheep the next day, the girls made a plan to get rid of the monkey. When he returned that night, they overpowered him when he entered the house and threw him into the hot oven, killing him in that way. Then the house and

³The word jinn suggests two very different kinds of supernatural creatures. The first is the huge supernatural being who comes forth from a bottle or appears in response

Story 1350

everything in it, as well as the flock of sheep, belonged to the three girls.

The girls lived there comfortably for some time, working around the house by day and crocheting every evening. One day the son of the padişah went hunting in that area, and when evening arrived, he saw the lights inside the house of the girls. Going up to one of the windows, he looked inside and listened to what the three girls were talking about as they crocheted.

The oldest sister said, "If I were ever to be the wife of the son of the padişah, I should cook him forty pots of food from just one egg."

The middle sister then said, "If I were ever to be the wife of the son of the padişah, I would make a rug for him so large that all of his soldiers could sit upon just one side of it."

When it was the turn of the youngest sister, she said "If I were ever to be the wife of the son of the padişah, I

to some signal, such as the rubbing of a magic lamp or ring. This creature then proceeds to give the caller supernatural or magic aid to achieve what he wishes. The other kind of jinn is never seen. It is a spiritual force referred to in some Sufi belief and in other mystical systems.

Story 1350

should bear him a son with golden bangs and a daughter with tight golden curls."

The prince returned to the palace and told his father what he had heard the three sisters say. The padişah arranged a wedding celebration for his son and the oldest of the three sisters. When the lengthy celebration ended, the bride was taken to the nuptial chamber. During this first night of their marriage, the prince said to the bride, "Remember your promise. You once said that if you were ever to become my wife, you would cook forty pots of food from just one egg."

The girl laughed and said, "Ah, hah--that was just a joke. Of course I did not mean anything when I uttered such silly words."

As soon as he heard this, the prince left the room and would have nothing further to do with the girl. He reported her deceit to his father and asked him to arrange a wedding for him and the middle sister. Again, after a lengthy wedding celebration, the marriage was completed and the bride was led to the nuptial chamber. There the prince said to her, "Remember your promise. You once said that if you ever were to become my wife, you would make me a rug

Story 1350

so large that all of my soldiers could sit on just one side of it."

middle sister answered, "Of course I was only joking! How could anyone make such a huge rug?"

he heard this response, the prince left the room at once and refused to have anything further to do with the middle sister. He went to his father and reported her deceit. At the same time he asked his father to make arrangements for his marriage to the youngest of the three sisters. After the third wedding celebration, the youngest sister was married to the son of the padişah. When she was led to the nuptial chamber, the prince said to her, "Remember your promise. You once said that if you were ever to become my wife, you would bear me a son with golden bangs and a daughter with tight golden curls."

"Yes, I remember that promise, and I intend to keep it if it is the will of Allah. Everything is in His hands."

The prince was pleased with this answer, and he welcomed the youngest sister as his wife. In a short time she became pregnant, and then after nine months, nine days, nine hours, and nine minutes,⁴ she gave birth to two

⁴Biology to the contrary notwithstanding, this is the time scheme for human gestation in Turkish folktales.

*Gestatin -
fertilization*

Story 1350

beautiful children: a son with golden bangs and a daughter with tight golden curls.

When the two older sisters heard about this, they grew very worried about their own welfare. The oldest sister said to the middle sister, "Even though the prince rejected us as his wives, he has allowed us to continue living comfortably in the palace. Now, however, he may cast us out or perhaps even send us to prison while he lives happily with our sister." They decided to hire a witch⁵ to help them in this matter

The witch got two newborn puppies and took them to the childbirth room in the palace. When no one was looking, she took the two children from the cradle and in their place she put the two puppies. She then had the two older sisters go to the son of the padişah and announce, "Our prince, your wife has given birth to two puppies."

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. That seems to be the case in this tale.

Witch
35 36,37-44

Baby - substitute
for in cradle

Accusation, False

Story 1350

When the prince heard this news, he said to several of his men, "Go and bury my wife up to her waist and throw two puppies she bore into the river." Those men left his presence and carried out his orders exactly. Let us now turn our attention to the twin babies

The witch took those two children, put them inside a box, and threw the box into the river. The box floated down the river until it came to a mill. There it became caught between two of the paddles of the waterwheel that ran the mill, causing the wheel to stop turning. The miller said to his wife, "Something has caused the waterwheel to stop turning. You hold the light for me, and I shall climb down and see what has happened." The miller found the box jammed between two of the paddles. He removed the box carried it into the mill, where he and his wife opened it. They were greatly surprised but very pleased to see inside the box the baby boy with golden bangs and the baby girl with tight golden curls.

The miller and his wife reared the children as if they had been their own. By the time they reached fifteen years of age, these two children had lost both of their foster parents. After the miller and his wife had

Buried, this
Buried, child

Stranded in
chest
Stranded in
water

mill - 39
Miller - 36*

Story 1350

*Affinity of
Hood him*

both died, the boy with golden bangs and his sister with tight golden curls lived alone in the house. The boy worked at the palace of the padişah. The son of the padişah was the boy's father, but the father and the son did not recognize each other. They were, however, ~~strongly attracted~~ to each other, and they became good friends. Later, when the prince saw his daughter, the girl with tight golden curls, he was strongly attracted to her also. In fact, he was so strongly drawn to her that he wanted to marry her, not knowing who she was

But the aunts of these children recognized who they were, and they again began to worry about their own welfare. The oldest sister said, "If the prince becomes too well acquainted with those children, he may learn who they really are. If that should happen, he would certainly punish us for what we have done to his family.

The middle sister answered, "We must do something to prevent the prince from learning that they are the children of our younger sister, or all of our secret will be exposed." They decided to hire the same witch who had helped them before. They finally found this old woman again, and they explained their situation to her.

Story 1350

The old witch said to them, "Don't worry about this any longer. I shall first remove the golden-banged boy, sending him somewhere far from here. Then it will be easier to get rid of the girl with tight golden curls." She changed her appearance and went to the children's house. She knocked on the door, and when she was admitted into the house by the girl with tight golden curls, she said, "Oh, my beautiful child, what are you doing here all alone? Why don't you have any companions?"

The girl replied, "Oh, auntie, I live here with my brother, but during the day when he is working, I am here by myself."

The old witch said, "Why don't you ask your brother to bring you the most beautiful girl in the world to be your companion? Having a good friend close to you would make you happy." Then the witch left.

That evening her brother, the golden-banged boy, returned home and noticed that his sister seemed sad. He asked her, "Oh, Sister, what happened to you? Why do you have such a long face?"

She answered, "Oh, my brother, I am very lonesome all day long in this house all by myself. I would like to have

38 — 48
She is the
fair girl

38-48

Story 1350

you bring here the most beautiful girl in the world to be my companion."

"Bring me my horse," said the boy. He had a marvelous horse which could run faster than a bird could fly. When this horse was brought to him, he mounted it, shouted, "Ya Allah! Ya Hızır!"⁶ and rode off. After a while he met a man riding a gray horse⁷ and he shouted to him,

"Selâmünaleyküm!"

"Aleykümselâm!"⁸ answered the man. He then said, "My

⁶This is the traditional way of calling for divine help in a time of crisis. One more often appeals to Allah, but next to Allah, Hızır is the most likely source of emergency aid.

Once a water deity and fertility god--and still both those figures to most farmers in southern Turkey--Hızır is more widely known now as a granter of wishes, a last-minute rescuer from disaster, and a special messenger and agent of God. In these latter three functions he appears fairly frequently in Turkish folktales. Not mentioned by name in the Koran, a chapter of that work was later named after him. He is assumed to be the person instructing Moses in Chapter XVIII of the Koran, where he is referred to by God simply as "our servant."

⁷Hızır, like many a Turkish hero, rides a gray horse.

⁸Selâmünaleyküm/Aleykümselâm--traditional exchange of greetings between Moslems not well acquainted with each other. It means roughly May peace be unto you/And may peace be unto you too. If Selâmünaleyküm is not responded to, the speaker should be wary of the one so addressed.

Story 1350

poor boy, you are under the influence of a witch, but I understand that and I also understand the quest you are now going upon. Let me tell you how to accomplish your goal. The most beautiful girl in the world at this time is a fairy girl, and you cannot capture her without special assistance. This assistance can be provided by a certain giantess, but to secure the help of that giantess, you will first have to rescue her from a difficulty of her own.

"Farther along on this plain there is a well from which hot water flows. At the mouth of that well the giantess has been pinned to the ground by a great tree which has fallen over far enough to trap her beneath it. She has been lying there in great pain for seven years. Dig all around the roots of that tree until it is loosened enough so that she can throw it aside and escape from beneath it. Then throw yourself into the well shaft and hide there until she promises not to kill you and eat you. As soon as you come out of hiding, you must rush to her and suck some milk from her breast."⁹

⁹This is the concept of milk siblings. It is not just a convention of the folktale but of Turkish real life as well. Nursing mothers sometimes nurse each other's infant briefly in order to establish this milk relationship. This is thought to create a bond not only between the sucklings

Giant
46-43

milk
sibling

46

Story 1350

The boy with the golden bangs did just as the man had directed. After he had freed the woman in acute pain from the weight of the tree, she looked around in an effort to catch him and kill him. The boy hid in the well shaft, as he had been told to do, until her pain had eased greatly. Then she said, "Oh, human being, I spent seven years in great pain beneath the weight of that tree. Although I have seven giant sons, none of them could find a way to release me from my suffering, but now you have done so. Wherever you are now, come out of hiding, and I shall not harm you."

Before she even saw him, the boy rushed from the well and sucked the breast of the giantess. She then picked him up carefully and kissed his eyes¹⁰ and thanked him for what he had done. They went to her house, but there she said to him, "Hide yourself again for a short while. It is time for my seven sons to come home, and if they see you, they will at first want to eat you." The golden-banged boy hid himself beneath one of the breasts of the giantess.

but also between their families. It is not as strong a bond as a family or clan tie, but it is one more way of gaining a meaningful alliance, a special kind of strong friendship.

¹⁰Kissing of the eyes (actually, the eyelids) is a gesture of affection often (but not always) extended to children.

Kissing of eyes

Story 1350

When her sons arrived home, they said, "Mother, we smell human flesh. There is a human being here somewhere, or there was one here earlier."

no, Sons," she said. "What would any human being be doing in an isolated place like this?"

But her sons did not believe her. They said, "Our noses do not lie, Mother, and they smell human flesh."

The giantess then said, "Very well, my sons. A human being did come here, and it was that human being who released me from the great tree and from the great pain that had tormented me for seven years. He sucked my breast, and I do not want you to harm him.

Mother," they answered. "We were once seven brothers but now we are eight.

After the golden-banged boy came out from hiding, the mother of the seven giants said to him, "Son, you may wish from me anything that you want

"My wish is to take home with me the most beautiful girl in the world."

"Alas, poor boy, you are under the influence of some evil person or you would not be undertaking such a difficult task, but I shall help you." Saying this, she went out to

Story 1350

her garden and picked three roses

43, 44
Transformation

The golden-banged boy and the giantess then went to the palace of the most beautiful girl in the world. Everywhere outside that palace stood rows and rows of men turned into stone. When the golden-banged boy knocked on the door, a voice from inside said, "Oh, human being, if you have come here for me, then turn into stone!" As soon as she said that, the boy's horse turned into stone. Then the voice from within said again, "Oh, human being, if you want me, now turn into stone!" And this time the boy himself turned into stone. But the giantess broke the fairy girl's spell by touching all of the stones with the roses from her garden, and all of them, including the golden-banged boy and his horse, were restored to flesh again.

(1) Enchantment
(2) Anti, later for Enchantment

The boy then said, "Oh, most beautiful girl in the world, come with me, for you are my destiny." They took everything from her palace that was light in weight but heavy in value, and they prepared to depart.

The giantess then said, "I have done what I can for you, and my work ends here. I shall now return home to my seven sons."

The golden-banged boy and the most beautiful girl in

Story 1350

the world then went to his country and to the house where his sister waited for them. The girl with tight golden curls was glad to see them, but the two evil aunts were dismayed at seeing their nephew again. Going at once to the witch, they said, "You told us that that boy could not return, but he did! What are we to do now?"

The old witch said, "Wait, wait! I shall send him off place from which there is no return."

On the following day the girl with tight golden curls and the most beautiful girl in the world were sitting in their home talking. The witch woman came to the door of their house and knocked on it. The girl with tight golden curls started toward the door, but the world beauty stopped and went to the door herself. Although no one had told her about the witch, the world beauty already knew all about that woman. Opening the door quickly, she struck the witch and turned her into a bathroom broom. She then threw that broom into the bathroom.

Then the fairy girl said to the girl with tight golden curls, "Go and invite the padişah here for dinner. On such and such a street there is a woman who has long been buried to the waist. Have her dug out, and bring her here for

Sanjoma

Story 1350

dinner too." The girl did as she had been instructed. After inviting the padişah to dinner that night, she went to such and such a street and had the buried woman dug out of the earth. That poor woman was taken home, bathed thoroughly, and dressed in new clothes.

That evening after the padişah had arrived, they all sat down to dinner. After everyone had eaten and drunk for some time, the guests were ready to leave, but the fairy girl said, "No, no, you cannot leave so soon, for the baked goose has yet to be served." When the goose had been placed on the table, the padişah reached for a piece of it, but as he did so, the fairy girl said, "Eat, my fine goose, Eat!"

Confused by this remark, the padişah asked, "How can a goose which has been slaughtered and baked eat?"

The fairy girl responded, "Speaking of such strange things, tell me how a human woman could give birth to a pair of puppies?" When the padişah stared at her in silence, she continued, "I am to be your daughter-in-law. This is your son, and that is your daughter, and that woman beside you is your wife. The two older sisters of your wife were responsible for all that you and your family have suffered.

Story 1350

They were the ones who caused all of this pain."

Edgerton
The padişah was at first quite bewildered by all of this news, but when he understood everything that had happened, he took appropriate action. He had the two evil older sisters executed. Then he had prepared a wedding celebration for his son and the most beautiful girl in the world. After this celebration had lasted for forty days and forty nights, the bride and groom were married. They had all of their wishes fulfilled, and, if Allah is willing, may we also have our wishes fulfilled.