

Story 2057 (Transcribed by Ahmet Ali Arslan from his tape and later used in his unpublished dissertation.)

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Location: Yeleşli village Göle kaza, Kars Province

Three Princes, Three Apples, and

### Three Fairy Girls

Once there was and once there wasn't a padishah who had three sons. Before the palace of that padishah there grew an unusual cypress tree. It was unusual because it bore three apples every year, and the apples themselves were even more unusual, for they had the ability to restore the youth of anyone who ate them. If a person ninety years old were to eat one of those special apples, he would at once be rejuvenated to the age of fifteen. The aging padishah wished to eat one of those apples, but every year when the apples began to ripen, they were stolen by a dragon.

After the three princes had grown to young manhood they went one day to talk with the padishah. They said "Father, why should we allow the dragon to steal the special apples from the cypress tree? Why shouldn't our old father live with the health and strength of a fifteen-year-old youth? We shall guard that tree until the dragon appears, to pick the apples, and then we shall kill him." The padishah was greatly pleased, and he approved of their plan to kill the dragon.

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At the time when the apples would begin ripening, the three princes took their guns<sup>1</sup> and stood guard around the cypress tree. When the dragon appeared, the oldest prince said to his younger brothers, "Stand back out of the way, and I shall shoot the dragon." The other two princes objected to this at first, but they then admitted that the oldest prince deserved the right to be the first to attack the dragon. They moved back away from the tree. However, the approaching monster was so frightening in appearance that the oldest brother fell to the ground in a dead faint after taking just one look at it. As a result, the dragon was able once again to steal the special apples. The unconscious oldest brother was carried back inside the palace, where he soon recovered. No one ever dies except by the will of Allah.

A year later when the apples again were ready to ripen, the middle brother tried to encounter the dragon. He did not have the courage to do so, however, and he fled before the dragon got even close to the cypress tree. Thus the special apples were lost again.

The next year the youngest brother said, "Now it is my

<sup>1</sup>Giving the princes guns is obviously an anachronism, for this widely distributed tale is of ancient origins. In the era of dragons there were no guns.

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turn to confront the dragon. Don't try to change my decision to do so." As the youngest brother was preparing for action, he said, "There is only one God, and He is Allah. Furthermore, I shall battle the dragon with the spiritual support of the eighteen thousand companions of Prophet Mohammed."

He then went to the cypress tree and waited. When he saw the dragon approaching, he said, "Bismillah!<sup>2</sup> Ya, Allah!" He then cocked his gun, took careful aim, and fired. He wounded the dragon, which quickly fled. The youngest prince then picked the three special apples. Taking them into the palace, he arranged them on a golden tray and presented them to his father, saying, "Here, my padishah, and may all your other enemies also be defeated

Delighted with the success of his youngest son, the padishah ate one of the apples and immediately began growing younger. This transformation continued until he had again the vitality of a boy of fifteen. Soon the older brothers began to grow jealous of the success of the youngest prince

The youngest son spoke again to the padishah, saying, "I got the special apples by wounding the dragon, but I did

<sup>2</sup>Bismillah (In the name of Allah) is the first part of the expression with which the Koran opens, Bismillahirrahmanirrahim (In the name of Allah, the Compassionate and Merciful). The full expression is used at the beginning of prayer services. Bismillah is usually uttered at the beginning of any undertaking in order to gain divine approval (or good luck) for that venture.

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not kill it. It could still cause us some difficulty, and so I am going to pursue it and kill it."

"Son, change your mind about that," said the padishah. "You brought me the special apples, and that was all that I wanted."

But the youngest prince answered, "No, Father. I shall either kill the dragon or be killed by him. One of us will be destroyed."

His two older brothers immediately said, "We shall accompany you in your pursuit of the monster." And so the three began at once to follow the bloody trail of the dragon. That trail led them to a distant cavern. Unlike most caverns, the one into which the dragon had gone straight down into the earth.

The oldest brother said, "Lower me down into this cavern so that I can kill the dragon. If I should shout up to you, 'I am burning,' then pull me back up." The other two agreed to this proposal. Tying a rope around his waist, they lowered the oldest brother between 100 and 150 meters into the earth. But then the oldest brother began shouting for help. "Oh! Oh! I am burning! Pull me up!" The two younger brothers pulled him up.



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The same thing happened when the middle brother was lowered into the cavern, and he, too, was pulled up.

But when it was the turn of the youngest brother to descend into the cavern, he said, "No matter how I may claim to be burning, just ignore my pleas for help and lower me still farther."

The two older brothers agreed to this, and when the youngest prince cried out, "I am burning! Pull me up!" they continued lowering him.

When the youngest brother finally reached the bottom of the cavern, he discovered there three beautiful girls who were embroidering. One of them spoke to him, saying, "Alas, human being! Why did you come down here? I am a daughter of the Padishah of Fairies, and these are my sisters.

The young man asked, "Who brought you down here?"

She answered, "The dragon did."

"How did that happen?"

"Once while I was walking around outside my father's palace, the dragon captured me and brought me down here. The following year he also brought my sisters here. If that dragon should see you here, he would destroy both you and us.

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The youngest prince said, "Show me where he is." Then he drew his sword and said, "Bismillah! Ya, Allah!" and started toward the door that the girl had pointed out.

But the girl stopped him, saying, "If that demon catches you, he will kill both you and me. I doubt that your sword is strong enough to wound him."

"What, then, do you think I should use to attack him?"

The girl answered, "There is a great sword hanging on the wall above his bed. With that weapon you could indeed kill him."

"How can I get that sword?" the prince asked.

"The door of his room is made of iron and cannot be smashed. When the dragon exhales, his breath swings the door out slightly, but when he inhales, it draws the door shut again. Listen to his breathing so that you will be able to enter his room."

"Very well," said the young man. "There is nothing easier to do than that." Then he again said, "Bismillah! Ya, Allah!" and went to the dragon's door. As the girl had said, the door opened slightly as the dragon exhaled but then closed again as he inhaled. At the right moment, the prince entered the room and grabbed the large sword from the wall. Saying, "You hungry monster and demonic

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enemy," he struck the dragon's head a mighty blow with the dragon's own great sword.

"Oh, human being," roared the dragon, "hit me one more time!"

"I was born from my mother's womb just once, and I shall strike you but once!"

The fairy girl shouted to the young man, "Don't hit him again! If you should strike him twice, he will recover his full strength again."<sup>3</sup> By letting the monster bleed to death without striking him again, the prince destroyed the dragon and sent him to hell.

When the prince returned to the living quarters of the fairy girls, he discovered there great riches in rugs, kilims<sup>4</sup>, and other valuable things. "Let us gather together

<sup>3</sup>Both the youngest prince and the fairy girl understand the appropriate way to deal with wounded giants, dragons, demons, and some other supernatural creatures. There is a taboo against striking again fatally wounded supernatural adversaries, whether the blow be animated by pride, cruelty, or vengeance. Breaking that taboo causes resuscitation of the wounded adversary and a complete restoration of his original strength.

<sup>4</sup>A kilim is a flat woven carpet. It is markedly different from an "Oriental" rug of the type made in Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and elsewhere. The "Oriental" rug starts with a strong cotton warp and woof through which woolen yarn is passed and tied in knots. Persian rugs have single knots; Turkish rugs have double knots. The knots, when trimmed, provide these rugs with a surface texture or nap that a kilim lacks. Kilims have many patterns; those with geometric designs are very popular.

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some of these treasures and take them with us into the world above." He carried all of these objects to the bottom of the cavern and had them pulled up to the surface by brothers.

Then it was time to take the fairy girls to the surface of the earth also. Tying the rope around the waist of oldest girl, he shouted up to the oldest brother, "Brother, this girl is yours." Then he tied the rope around the waist of the next-oldest girl and called up to the middle brother, "Brother, this next-oldest girl is yours."

When it was the turn of the youngest and prettiest girl to be raised to the surface of the earth, she at first refused to go. She said, "Human beings are suckled on raw milk and thus may develop evil ideas.<sup>5</sup> You go up first, and I shall then follow you." But the youngest brother did not agree with this judgment. The girl then took from her finger a magic gold ring and gave it to him, saying, "If you

<sup>5</sup>This is a Turkish proverb. See Yurtbaşı, Metin, A Dictionary of Turkish Proverbs (Ankara: Turkish Daily News, 1993), pp. 509, Col. 1, and 638, Col. 3. --This expression appears not only in Turkish folktales but also in Turkish real life, but to this point in time (1998) we have found no one who can explain the saying. Since the expression is an old one, it cannot very well be making a distinction between pasteurized and unpasteurized milk. Furthermore, although human beings may drink raw milk, there is no indication that supernatural creatures cook their milk.



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are ever in serious trouble, lick this ring and say 'Big-Lipped Arab!'<sup>6</sup> Then either an Arab or some other creature will come to your assistance. The first time you use the magic ring down here, two rams will appear, one white and the other black. If you mount the white ram, it will carry you upward to the bright world above. If you mount the black ram, may Allah protect you, for only He knows where you will be taken." The prince accepted that ring and put it on his finger at once.

When the youngest fairy girl arrived in the upper world, the two older brothers were dazzled by her beauty. They shouted into the cavern, "Was it proper for you to save the prettiest girl for yourself?" Before they could hear any response from below, they filled in the mouth of the cavern with rocks. Then they loaded the girls and the dragon's treasure on horses and set out for home.

The youngest prince was shocked by the treachery of his brothers, but there was nothing that he could do about it at

<sup>6</sup>When a magic object summons supernatural help, the creature who responds to the call is often an Arab. In folktales many Arabs are incorrectly pictured as being black. Some are even given Negroid facial features, especially large lips. Sometimes an Arab jinn that appears is said to have one lip touching the sky and the other dragging on the ground. Because some of Turkey's closest neighbors are Arab nations, it is surprising that this false stereotype persists, but folk motifs are often irrational.

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that time. There was no way in which he could escape from the closed cavern without help. Following the advice of the youngest fairy girl, he licked the magic ring which she had given to him. There appeared immediately two rams, one white and the other black. As they rushed toward him in a cloud of dust, he tried to mount the white ram, but when the dust cleared, he found himself on the back of the black ram.

The black ram began descending, level after level. They traveled downward a great way, and when they came to a halt, they found themselves in a land of almost total darkness. Dismounting and releasing the black ram, the prince proceeded on foot. After awhile he heard an old woman calling, "Çukuruk, çukuruk, çuu!"

Relieved to hear her voice, the prince said to himself, "Oh, good! It is helpful to know that there are human beings down here. But why is it so dark?" He went to the old woman and asked, "Grandmother, what are you doing?"

"I am doing nothing but calling my chickens," she answered.

"Grandmother, would you accept me in your house as a guest?"

"Oh, no, son. I have neither room for you nor any food to feed you," she said. But after he had given her a handful

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of gold coins, she said, "Well, I can make room for you, and with some of this money I can buy food for you."

Let us leave the two of them there briefly while we go to see what the padishah of this land of darkness was doing. The padishah was greatly concerned about a problem that had been continuing for years. There was no water supply for his land except one large well, and that well was controlled by a dragon. In order to allow the people of that land to draw water from his well, the dragon required that they feed him one young girl a year. The problem was now especially painful to the padishah, for this year it would be the turn of his only daughter to be fed to the monster.

Back at the old woman's house, the youngest prince said, "Grandmother, I am very thirsty." Of course he did not yet know about the water shortage in that land, and so he did not understand why the old woman did not give her guest a drink. Again he said, "Grandmother, I am extremely thirsty. Please give me a glass of water!" The old woman went outside and urinated in a glass, and she gave this to her guest.

Tasting the liquid in the glass, the prince said, "Grandmother, this is very salty water!"

"Son, forgive me, but that is the only water I have. All the water in this land comes from a well controlled by

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a dragon. In order for us to have access to his water for one day a year, we must feed him a young girl. If one is strong enough, one can carry away enough water from that well to last for a whole year. But I am old and have no help, and so I am able to carry away only enough water to last for a short while.

"When will the water be made available to people this year?" asked the prince

"Tomorrow is the day," she said, "and it is the turn of the padishah's only daughter to be fed to the dragon. Then we shall be permitted to get some water."

"All right, grandmother. Let us see what will happen tomorrow.

On the following morning the people led the daughter of the padishah to the well and said to the dragon, "Here she is. Take her! She is yours." Just as the dragon was opening his mouth to eat her, the prince slashed its neck with his sword, killing it. When he looked around, he saw the grandmotherly old woman filling her bucket with the bloody water. To her amazement, he grabbed the bucket from her hands and threw it aside.

"Son, may Allah punish you for doing that! Everyone else is carrying away water, but now I shall not have any for another year."



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The prince answered, "Go away now, grandmother, and come back after an hour. By then you will be able to get clean water." She cursed the prince, but she did as he had directed. After an hour she returned to find bubbling up in the well the clearest water she had ever seen. Everyone was happily filling containers with this water

Let us now see what the daughter of the padishah was doing while all of this was going on. She dipped her hand in the blood of the dragon and secretly pressed her hand against the back of the prince.

By then several people had rushed to the palace with the very good news. "May you live long, our padishah! We have come to congratulate you and tell you that your daughter is alive and well. Such and such a young man killed the dragon and saved your daughter."

When the padishah heard this, he wished to reward the young dragon slayer. He sent town criers throughout the city to make this announcement: "All people between the ages of seven and seventy must come and pass before the door of my palace. I shall give my daughter in marriage to whoever it was who killed the dragon and saved her life. Everyone started moving toward the palace, and every man among them hoped that he might be thought to be the one who had slain the dragon.

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Let us now see what the youngest brother was doing while all of this public excitement was going on. He returned to the grandmother's home where he could rest for awhile. He preferred lying in the ashes to being outside where people were all being treated to kabob by the servants of the ruler

As they had been ordered to do, the residents of that city passed slowly before the door of the palace, but none of them was identified by the princess as the dragon slayer. The padishah ordered that all of the people should return on the following day and once again pass slowly by the palace door. In the meantime, the padishah asked every one of his viziers and everyone who worked at the palace if he knew of any citizen who had failed to enter the march past the palace. Finally one of the executioners said, "My padishah, there is just one male between the ages of seven and seventy who did not report to the palace, and this stranger is little more than a boy. He has been a guest at the shack of a poor old woman who lives at such and such a place on the edge of the city."

The padishah said, "Regardless of whether he is just a boy, and regardless of whether he is a stranger, I ordered all people between the ages of seven and seventy to parade

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past my palace door. See to it that this young man is among those who file past this palace tomorrow."

The youngest brother had no choice but to join those walking past the palace the next day. Just as he was abreast of the palace door, he was struck by a golden ball thrown by the daughter of the padishah. Not aware yet that his back bore the bloody imprint of the girl's hand, the prince turned around and cried out, "Why did you strike me?" He then started to leave, but before he could escape, the executioners seized him and took him into the presence of the padishah.

The padishah said, "Son, make a wish, and I shall give you whatever you request."

The young man answered, "My padishah, I wish only for your good health."

"You can gain nothing from my good health. Wish for something for yourself." Three times the padishah asked the same question, and three times the youngest brother gave the same answer. The padishah then said, "As I told you, son, my good health can be of no benefit to you. I shall, therefore, give you my daughter in marriage

"Let your daughter remain just my sister in both worlds.

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What I really wish from you is my return to the bright world above. Will you arrange to have me taken there?"

The padishah answered, "Son, you are asking for something which I am unable to do for you. Between my land and the exit to the world above lies the kingdom of the Emerald-Green Anka<sup>7</sup>. We are not on friendly terms with each other, and so I cannot pass through his country to reach passage to the upper world

"Well, that is my only wish," said the prince.

"I owe you so much that I shall give my throne to you!"

"Thank you, your majesty, but I do not wish to have your throne."

After thinking for a minute, the padishah said, "Son the only thing that I can do for you is to have you taken to the border of the land of the Emerald-Green Anka. Neither I nor any of my men can go any farther than that. It is impossible."

When the prince accepted this offer, the padishah

<sup>7</sup>The anka is one of several giant birds of Middle Eastern folklore. Others are the phoenix, the simurgh, and the roc (rukh). They are capable of flying great distances swiftly and of carrying heavy loads while doing so. Sindbad is carried on the back of a roc.



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ordered a company of soldiers to conduct him to the border. After traveling for days, they reached that border, where the commander of the troops said, "This is where we must leave you

The anka who ruled the land which the prince was now entering was female. She was a very unhappy bird, for although she was seventy or eighty years old, she still had no surviving children. Each year she had laid eggs in a nest in a tall tree, and in due time several baby ankas had hatched from those eggs. But each year while the mother bird had been foraging food for her children, a dragon had climbed to their nest and devoured them. The youngest son arrived in her land at a time when her nest was again filled with baby ankas.

The prince went to the tree in which the ankas lived, but the mother bird was not there. She was hunting for food for her children. As the prince sat near the tree waiting for her return, he heard loud cries coming from the nest above. Opening his eyes more widely, he saw a dragon starting to climb up the trunk of the great tree to eat the small birds. Drawing his sword, he struck the dragon such a strong blow that its body was cut into two parts, which fell back

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to the earth bleeding profusely. When the nest full of small birds had grown quiet again, the prince, now tired, fell asleep near the foot of the tree

When the mother anka returned, she was alarmed to see the blood on the ground and a human being asleep nearby. Thinking that this year it was he who had killed her children, she swooped down toward him angrily. But the baby birds all cried, "No, Mother, no! He killed the dragon and saved our lives." The mother then saw the two halves of the dead dragon's body. She was so pleased with the prince's help that the blessed bird spread her wings above him to protect him while he slept.

When he awakened, the youngest brother was alarmed by the hugeness of the creature hovering over him. "Don't be afraid, human being," said the anka, "for I shall not harm you. Just tell me what you want for having rescued my children, and I shall make it possible for you to have your wish granted."

"I wish only for your good health," answered the prince

The bird replied, "Son, let me make you the padishah of this land."

"No, I do not wish to become padishah of this land. But you can do something else for me. You can take me back

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to the bright world above."

"There would be nothing easier than that for me to do, but first you must get me the supplies that I shall need to make that long flight. Get fifty liters of sherbet<sup>8</sup> and fifty kilos of meat to feed me as I fly."

The prince agreed to do this, but he did not know how he would ever be able to get such supplies in a land where he was a stranger. "How can I get those supplies?" he asked himself. Then a moment later he answered himself: "I must return to the neighboring land and get them from its padishah." The padishah whose daughter the prince had saved from death was so pleased to be able to repay the prince in some way that he gave him ten camels loaded with sherbet and ten camels loaded with meat. Again that padishah had a company of soldiers accompany him to the border.

The prince was a guest of the anka during the night after his return to her country. On the following morning the anka spread her mighty wings and said, "Load the sherbet on my left wing and the meat on my right wing, and you sit between them on my back. Close your eyes until we have left the ground but then later open them, for you

<sup>8</sup>In Turkey and some other countries sherbet is a cold fruit drink and not the icy confection that it is in the United States.

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must feed me sherbet and meat as I call for those things."

The prince loaded the supplies and then seated himself in the midst of them. He closed his eyes while the great bird was struggling upward into the air, but he opened them again as soon as the anka began flying away from that place. As they traveled much and traveled little<sup>9</sup>, the ■ bird called out frequently for sherbet and for meat. When the sky began to grow yellow, the prince realized that they must be getting close to the bright world above. But before they reached their destination, the supply of meat was used up. When the anka asked once more for meat, the prince took out his knife and with it cut a piece of flesh from one of his own legs. As soon as the bird tasted that meat, she realized that it was human flesh, and so instead of eating it, she just held it beneath her tongue.

When the anka descended to the ground in the bright world, she said to the prince, "If there is anything else I can do for you, just order it."

"Only Allah can order. My only wish was to be returned to this bright world, and now I am here. May Allah

<sup>9</sup>This is a formulaic description of extended travel; it appears earlier in this tale and in many other tales.



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bless you for your help." After kissing one of the bird's feet,<sup>10</sup> the prince began to walk away, but he was limping.

The anka called to him, "Wait! Why are you limping?"

"I do not know how I can explain that to you, for I am embarrassed about it. The last time that you asked for meat, there was none left, and so I cut a piece from my leg to feed you.

Saying, "I know," the anka took from her mouth the piece of human flesh and stuck it fast with her saliva to the place on the prince's leg from which it had been taken. She then asked, "How does it feel now--all right?"

"It is well, and it never felt better." The prince then kissed the bird's foot again, and she kissed his eyes.<sup>11</sup> Then they both left that place, the anka traveling downward and the prince traveling in the direction of his father's palace

<sup>10</sup> Kissing of the hands and/or feet of another person is a gesture of respect. Since the bird has no hands, the prince kisses her foot.

<sup>11</sup> The eyes (actually, the eyelids) of children and sometimes of servants are kissed by older or more prominent people as a gesture of affection or approval.

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The youngest brother went little, he went far. As he was passing along a mountainside, he saw many sheep grazing there. When he found the shepherd, he said, "Selamüna-leyküm."

"Aleykümselam."<sup>12</sup> What are you doing here?"

"I wish to buy a sheep from you," said the prince

"Ağa"<sup>13</sup>, how can I sell you something which I do not own? I am only a shepherd here. The sheep belong to my master."

Giving the shepherd a handful of gold, the prince said, "Here is much more than enough to pay for a sheep." When the shepherd had slaughtered a black sheep for him, the prince said, "You may keep the meat for yourself. All I want is the skin." After washing and drying the sheepskin,

<sup>12</sup>Selamünaleyküm/Aleykümselam--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 Selamünaleyküm is not responded to, the speaker should be wary of the one so addressed. ■

<sup>13</sup>An ağa (English, agha) is a rural landowner, sometimes wealthy, often powerful. The word does not indicate an official title but describes an economic status. They are often the principal employers of farm workers, and they are often viewed by their employees as harsh, driving, and abusive. The term ağa is also used in a complimentary way, as an honorific, for a distinguished or just older person than the one using the term. Thus an older brother is called ağa bey by his younger siblings. Ağa bey may be used as a deferential term to one older or more prestigious than the speaker. A taxi driver may refer to his passenger as ağa bey; a salesman speaking to a male customer may call him ağa bey.

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the prince turned it inside out and cut from it a piece large enough to cover his head and hair completely. When he pulled that piece over his head, he looked like a keloğlan<sup>14</sup>. He also exchanged his good clothes for the shepherd's old and tattered garments, the kind that a keloğlan would be likely to wear.

In this disguise he proceeded to the city where his father, the padishah, lived. There he learned that plans were being made for a wedding between his oldest brother and the youngest fairy girl from the underworld. He also heard that the girl had refused to marry the oldest prince unless he could get for her a golden tray upon which a golden hen and her golden chicks walked about eating golden kernels

<sup>14</sup>The word keloğlan means bald boy. The loss of hair referred to comes not from aging but from ringworm infestation of the scalp. Ringworm is encouraged by uncleanness, and it is more common in remote rural areas where bathing facilities are minimal. In a large family the younger children, often unattended, are prey to this disease. In folktales the keloğlan is a sympathetic figure: intelligent, courageous, and often lucky; thus despite his handicap, he is usually successful. By selective extension, the word often has an altered connotation. Keloğlan may simply refer to the youngest child in a family, all the way from the royal household to that of the most lowly peasant. As such, he retains all the qualities of the bald boy except his baldness. Like everyone else, the keloğlan must have a name, but we almost never learn what it is. The word keloğlan is simply capitalized and serves as his name: Keloğlan.

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of grain. (She had made this request because she knew that the only person who could make such objects was the possessor of her magic ring. When Keloğlan heard this news, he went at once and became an apprentice of the city's most distinguished jeweler. There he worked on rings, necklaces, and earrings

After he had worked there for just a few days, Keloğlan noticed that the master jeweler often acted confused. He walked about aimlessly as if he were lost in his own shop. Keloğlan finally asked, "Master, where do you think you are going when you wander around in this way?"

"I get lost in my thoughts about a great problem that I have. The oldest son of the padishah wishes to marry the youngest of three strange but beautiful girls who recently arrived at the palace. But she has refused to marry him unless he can bring to her a golden tray upon which a golden hen and her golden chicks walk about eating golden kernels of grain. I have been ordered to make this set of golden objects, and if I fail to do so, I shall be executed. I cannot make such lifelike objects, nor do I know of anyone else who can."

"Those things are not very difficult to make. Give me

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the required amount of gold to construct these objects. Give me also a kilo of dried grapes and a kilo of nuts, and by tomorrow morning I shall give you what you need."

After the master jeweler had retired, Keloğlan hid the gold. Then he ate some of the dried grapes and nuts. He slept on the floor of the jewelry shop most of the night, waking from time to time to eat more grapes and more nuts

When the jeweler returned to the shop in the morning, he asked his apprentice, "Well, what happened last night, Keloğlan?"

"What should have happened, master? By the time you get ready to go to the palace, you will find waiting for you here the things you wish to deliver for the oldest son of the padishah." When he was alone again, Keloğlan licked the magic ring. When two large-lipped Arabs appeared, he said to them, "I want at once a golden tray on which a golden hen and her golden chicks are walking about eating golden kernels of grain." He had barely finished giving this order when the tray and its lifelike chickens appeared before him.

When the jeweler saw the golden tray and the animated objects walking about on it, he said, "I would sacrifice

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my life if need be for you, Keloğlan. There is not anyone else like you!" He then took the tray to the palace and presented it to the padishah.

When the youngest of the fairy girls heard about arrival of the golden masterpiece, she said to herself, "Aha! This is clear evidence that the youngest prince has escaped from the underworld and has come home."

The padishah continued the preparations for the wedding celebration. He invited everyone to attend that event. He had criers announce in the streets, "The padishah's oldest son will be married at such and such a time to the youngest of the female guests at the palace. All residents of city between the ages of seven and seventy are invited to attend."

Keloğlan planned to attend the wedding celebration too. He secretly paid servants at the palace to find out which horses and which horsemen would be participating in the cirit<sup>15</sup> games scheduled to take place during the wedding festivities.

<sup>15</sup>Cirit (pronounced jirit) is an ancient Turkish game similar to European jousting at tournaments. The difference, however, is this: Tournaments feature contests between two participants; cirit is a "battle royal," a free-for-all struggle in which each participant fights against all other participants. Once a deadly game, cirit in modern times is played not with javelins but with blunted sticks.



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When he had secured this information, he went aside and called up a big-lipped Arab and said, "Bring me a powerful gray horse<sup>16</sup> and bring me clothes suitable to be worn in the presence of the padishah." Once these things were brought to him, he abandoned his keloğlan disguise and rode to the throne which had been set up at the cirit playing field. He said, "May Allah bless you, my padishah! My horse is very high-tempered and may be dangerous to contestants on the cirit field. I therefore need your permission to enter the cirit contests."

"You are free to enter any of the games you wish." The padishah did not recognize this son whom he thought that he had lost forever.

The youngest prince did not join in any of the early cirit games but waited to enter the field until the later game in which his brothers were scheduled to participate. In that later contest he targeted the older of his two brothers. He threw his javelin with such great force that

<sup>16</sup>From ancient times Turkish heroes have ridden iron-gray horses. Bamsi Beyrek rides such a horse in The Book of Dede Korkut, as does Kōroğlu in the epic named after him.

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it passed right through the body of his opponent. The crowd shouted, "Stop him! Stop him! He has killed the crown prince!" But by then the youngest brother had fled on his superior horse beyond the reach of any of his pursuers. Changing back into his keloğlan disguise, he circled back to the jewelry shop and went to work again at his bench-  
tak, tak, tak.

The padishah ordered forty days of mourning for his oldest son. On the forty-first day, plans began to be made for the marriage of the middle son to the youngest of the female guests at the palace. But just as before, the fairy girl had a condition which had to be satisfied before she would agree to the marriage. She said, "Before I shall marry the prince, I want to receive from him a golden tray upon which a golden hound is chasing three golden rabbits."

When the jeweler received the order to make this unusual gift, he turned at once to Keloğlan and asked, "Can you also make this kind of mechanical device?"

Keloğlan answered, "All that I need to do so is the necessary amount of gold as well as a kilo of dried grapes and a kilo of nuts." When these supplies were provided for his use, the keloğlan again enjoyed himself throughout

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the night, and in the morning he ordered the big-lipped Arab to bring him a golden tray upon which a golden hound was chasing three golden rabbits. The jeweler delivered it at once to the palace.

When the wedding celebration began a few days later, the youngest brother again decided to participate in the cirit games. This time he ordered the big-lipped Arab to provide him with a powerful brown horse. He then rode to the edge of the cirit field and watched the game that was in progress. Seeing him there, the padishah asked him, "What are you waiting for? Why don't you join the game?"

"My horse is rather wild and might injure one or another of the players. I felt, therefore, that I should not enter the field without your permission, my padishah.

"You are free to ride onto the field at any time you choose to do so."

After the youngest prince had ridden onto the cirit field, he went this way and he went that way trying to get close to his brother. That was not easy to do because the field was crowded during this particular game. By reversing his direction one more time, he was able to trap his prey. Saying, "This is for you, prince," he dealt his brother a fatal blow.

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People in the crowd of spectators said, "Now the padishah's other son has also left this world. Let us catch the killer!" But the youngest brother escaped again easily. Putting on his keloğlan disguise, he returned to the jewelry shop before his master did. The jeweler himself arrived back from the games a few minutes later. He said angrily "That youngest female guest at the palace is the daughter of the son of a dog! She is responsible for the deaths of the two princes!"

"What happened?" asked Keloğlan.

"The padishah's second son was also killed on the cirit field."

The padishah also ordered a forty-day period of mourning for the loss of his second son. While this mourning was in progress, the youngest fairy girl thought about her betrothed. "I know that he has returned to this city, for the two gifts I demanded could not have been made without the help of the ring I gave to him. But what should I do now? I should find some way of bringing him to the attention of the padishah

When the period of mourning had ended, she spoke to the padishah. She said, "I admired very much the two

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marvelous mechanical gifts which were constructed by the most distinguished jeweler in this city. But I should like to see how he made them. Could you have him come to the palace and construct such a toy right before our eyes?"

When the jeweler was called to the palace, he said that he himself had made the golden toys. But when he was asked to demonstrate exactly how he had done this, he had to admit the truth. He said, "Neither I nor my wife made those toys. It was my apprentice who did the work

That apprentice was sent for at once. When the youngest fairy girl saw the youngest brother, she recognized him at once, for he was still wearing the ring she had given him. She then felt safe enough to tell the padishah everything that had happened. She ended her report by saying, "May you live long, my padishah! This is your youngest son, the true prince. He has returned from the underworld to the real world, and he is betrothed to me."

The padishah was delighted to see his youngest son, who immediately kissed his father's hand. The young couple had a wedding that lasted for forty days and forty nights. They lived their time and then passed into the soil which we now walk upon. Farewell!