

Story #423 (Tape #5, 1972)

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The Peasant and the Three Women Who Help Him Become Padishah

During the time of the padishahs, the Padishah of Erzurum and the Padishah of Istanbul each had one child, the one a boy and the other a girl.

the girl one night, and after that he thought a good deal about her. One night shortly after this, the angels carried the young man to the girl's palace. When he awoke in the morning, the young man saw himself lying beside the girl as he had seen in his dream. He said, "What are you doing here?"

She said, "What are you doing here? This is my room."

"No, it is my room."

Although they failed to agree about this, they were greatly excited within their hearts. He said, "Just a minute. We shall soon discover the truth." He ordered the chief of the palace women to come. He called but there was no reply. When he repeated his call, there was still no reply. He then said to the girl, "You call." She did call, and soon the chief of the palace women came to the door of the room. From that, they knew that it was indeed the girl's room.

"What shall we do about this?" they asked each other. They decided

to wait until the morning to do anything. "Then we can tell my father," the girl said, "and, with the approval of both families, we shall be married."

They placed a sword between them in the bed, the one sleeping on the one side of it, the other on the other side. That is the way they slept. While they were sleeping in this way, the young man was carried back to his own country by the angels.¹ Before they had gone to sleep they had exchanged gifts. She had given him a comb, and he had given her a ring.

When he awoke in the morning, he could not find the girl or any trace of her. "What kind of business is this?" he thought to himself. He could not quite make up his mind about what had happened. But the very next night he had another dream, a dream in which the girl said to him, "I shall wait for you at the edge of such-and-such cemetery. Come for me there."

The young man could not decide whether this was serious or a trick of some kind. During his sleep, however, a dervish came to him and, raising him up, said to him, "The girl awaits you at the edge of the cemetery. You will go there and get her."

In the morning he saddled his horse, mounted it, and said farewell. He could not reach the place where the girl awaited, however. She waited there for him for two days, but there was no sign of him. On the third day, when he still did not appear, she saw a poor, hopeless fellow sleeping by the cemetery, but it was not the young man for whom she had waited.

¹The Turkish word for angel is melek and the plural, melekler. The narrator here uses the Arabic plural melayiker but adds to it the Turkish plural suffix -ler.

"Apparently this is my kismet [destiny]," she said to herself. Then she awakened the sleeping fellow, had him mount her horse behind her and with him rode away.

This young man was a dull fellow. After riding for a while, they came to the edge of a city where they set up a tent under which they sat. The girl said, "Take this money, go into the city, and with it buy us something to eat and drink. Also get a suit of clothes for yourself. Buy them and then come back here."²

The young man went into the city, but as he was a peasant, even though his wife was a society woman (and the daughter of a padishah), he bought two loaves of bread, two or three onions, and a radish. He bought also a suit of peasant clothes, which he put on, and returned to the girl.

"What is this?" she asked.

"Well, I have brought some food for you," he said.

"Couldn't you find anything better than this in the city? Couldn't you find a better suit of clothes than that one?"

The young man was sorry about this. He went and sat on the bank of a stream, letting his feet hang in the water. After a while, he saw a precious stone come rolling along the bottom of the stream. He reached down and lifted it out. When he looked at it, he found that it was beautiful.

²When competent raconteurs rival each other at a tale-telling session, the result is likely to be a superior performance. With inferior raconteurs, such as those on this tape, the game of one-up-manship produces imitation and repetition. Özsarı retold "The Auspicious Dream," trying to outdo Kurultay's version but producing a hodgepodge. One senses here that Sav has picked up part of Özsarı's material—the substituted lover who is an untutored peasant boy to whom the ways of town and city are unknown.

He put it in his shirt.³

When he did not return to her, the girl went to where he was sitting on the bank of the stream. "Come," she said, "let us go into the city together."

They went into the city and bought delicate foods and good suits of clothes for the young man. They then left that city and went to another where they applied to the chief administration--every city has them--and said, "Find an apartment for us." He did this. After they had started living there, however, the chief administrator fell in love with the girl and planned to take her away from the young man.

Previously, in order to establish favorable relations with the chief administrator, the girl had placed one of her jewels upon a tray and sent it to the official. The official had looked at it and said to himself, "Although I am so very wealthy, I have no such stone. How can these people own such a thing? In order to get rid of the young man, I must demand of them another jewel to match this one." He returned the precious stone that the girl had sent and demanded a pair of them.

The young man said, "I have another one like that," and he took it from his shirt.

But this still did not satisfy the chief administrator. He said, "I want four stones, all of them like the second one you sent. Otherwise I shall execute you."

The young man went home and thought about this. He remembered that

³Turkish peasants do carry things inside their shirts, for the shalvar trousers that they wear often have no pockets.

Tash

Revised re 19 Feb

he had found the precious stone in a stream. "There ~~must~~ be more of them in that stream," he said to himself. While

it fell back into the water. He then entered the water himself and searched for the stone. He saw a girl standing in a hollow place. To see who it he went to the hollow place and searched around it.

"What do you seek here?" she asked.

"I am looking for you," he said.

"If you want to possess me, there is something you must do first. *Ind - ar 51,5*
sure, but 59
Here is a grindstone. If you can lift this over your shoulders, as I am doing now, I shall marry you."

"Saying, "Ya Allaha Bismillahirrahmanirrahim!"⁴ he grabbed the grindstone and lifted it.

"All right, I shall be your wife," the girl said.

When he had seen this girl first, he had completely forgotten about the precious stone he had sought. The two now returned to his first wife.

first wife asked, "Where have you been all this time?"

"Well, it is such-and-such," he said to her. They then explained their problem to the new girl.

She said to them,—"Stretch forth your fingers." They did this, and she bled each finger with a razor blade.⁵ The drops of blood turned into

⁴"O Allah! I begin with the name of Allah!" Devout Moslems begin every undertaking or effort with this experssion. Often it is shortened to "Bismillah!"

⁵This is an obvious anachronism, for although there were razors, there were not razor blades "during the time of the padishahs."

precious stones, and they were exactly like those demanded by the chief administrator. They placed these jewels upon a tray and sent them to that official.

He looked at these stones and said to himself,
work. What can I do now?"

tive in planning and carrying out evil deeds.

"How can we solve this problem?"

"It is very easy," she said. "There is a person named Gül Gülistan Hanım, who lives in such-and-such a country. You will order him to bring a rose from her garden. Of course, he cannot do it."

Jash

The young man was called by the chief administrator and told this:

"There is a person by the name of Gül Gülistan Hanım. You must bring me a rose from her garden. If you cannot do it, you will be executed."

The young man was on the best of terms with the fairy girl, and so he explained his difficulty to her. She said to him, "Very well, I shall go and bring that rose for you from that place, but will you be able to get what I want from you?"

"What is it?"

"I want forty camel loads of cheese and forty loads of sorghum and forty loads of meat."

"All right," he said, and he set out at once to get these things. He reached the Country of the Ants, where the fairy girl had directed him to go. She had told him, "When you reach the Country of the Ants, you will say, 'Let the sorghum sacks fall !' Then the ants will give you a charm, which you should put in your shirt. When you are in distress, you will

amulet

take it out and use it. When you reach the Land of the Ravens, you will say, 'Let the meat sacks fall,' and the meat sacks will start falling. The ravens will also give you a ^{amulet} charm, which you will also hide. Then you will go until you reach the sea, where you will be faced by the Shah of the Fishes. He will say to you, 'O son of man, give me the provisions for my soldiers and then pass.' You will say, 'Let the cheese sacks fall!' and sacks of cheese will fall. Then the Shah of the Fishes will also give you a charm which should be put in your shirt. Then cross that sea and reach the garden of Gül Gülistan Hanım. When you reach that place, pluck a rose and start running away without ever looking back."⁶

He finally reached the palace, entered its garden, and there plucked a rose. He started back, but along the way he thought, "Suppose they ask me what I had seen at the palace of Gül Gülistan Hanım. What could I tell them?" He therefore turned back. When he again reached the palace, he circled around it but could not find any entrance. Finally a door in the wall opened. He walked through it, and there he saw a girl embroidering. 5)

She said to him, "What are you doing here? If my father sees you now, he will kill you."

He went to the presence of her father, who asked, "What do you want?"

"I come, at the command of Allah, to ask for the hand of your daughter." *Franklin Exp.*

Her father said, "I have three wishes to be fulfilled. If you fulfill these, I shall give you my daughter. My first wish is this: I have forty I had a

⁶Earlier in this tale the fairy girl had said that she would pluck the rose from this garden if he would get the 40 loads apiece of cheese, sorghum, and meat. *Sister Test*
59-63
65

barns full of wheat and forty barns full of barley. You will mix the wheat with the barley, and then you will sort it all out again within the time I allow you. If you cannot do this, well, you will already know your punishment."

"Very well," said the young man. Then he went to the doors of the barns and mixed the wheat with the barley. He went into the barns and picked up one grain of wheat and put it here and one grain of barley and put it over there, but he realized now that he could not cope with this situation "What a mistake I have made! Why did I not just leave the place and go home?" he said to himself. While trying to find a way to solve his difficulty, he remembered the ants. He took out the charm given to him by the ants and held it to the fire. In a second, "Tak!" came the ants.

"Oh, son of man," said the leader of the ants, "were you in such serious need that you had to burn me and hurt me?"

"This wheat must all be sorted out of this barley or else I shall lose my head," he explained.

"You stand aside, then," said the ant. It started working, and in a short time the barley was separated from the wheat. It then sent word that the job was completed.

The father of the girl looked at the completed job and saw that there had been no cheating. "Good," he said; "my first task is fulfilled. Now here is my second wish. We shall get in a boat and sail out from land. You will find, on the bottom of the sea, a ring I am wearing when I take it off and throw it into the sea. If you ring, again, you will be delivered to the executioners."

*Amrah -
befful
60-63*

*Tak a
note, Ted*

60-61

They boarded a boat and sailed out. When they were in the middle of the sea, the old man took off his finger a ring he was wearing and threw it into the water. Then they returned to the shore. The young man took off his clothes and dived into the sea. He searched for the ring quite a while, but there was no sign of it. He swam farther, but still could not find it, and now he grew quite nervous about the task. While thinking about what he would do, he finally remembered the charm given him by the Shah of the Fishes. He held it to a fire, and suddenly the Shah of Fishes appeared. "Oh, son of man," he said, "you must be in great distress if you burn me so."

"Yes, I am in great distress. A ring went down to the bottom of the sea, and if I cannot find it and take it, I am to be delivered to the executioners."

The Shah of Fishes assembled his soldiers and questioned them about the ring. They reported that they had not seen it anywhere. Just then a crippled fish and some small fish approached, fighting one another as they came. The Shah of Fishes said, "Let us wait a moment. We shall ask these fishes approaching and see if they know anything about the ring. If they know nothing about it, then we shall see what is to be done next." They asked these approaching fish, and it happened that they had actually found the ring and were now quarreling about who should possess it. The crippled fish had found it, and they recovered it from him.

The third wish of the padishah was this: "The waters of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean are going to be farther separated from each other, and in between the two seas the Zemzem Water⁷ will spring up.

⁷The Zemzem Water comes from a spring at Mecca. Drops of this sacred water from a sacred spring placed on the tongue of a dying person will purify him from sin. For the living, it has curative powers and can heal any illness.

You will fill a pitcher with the Zemzem Water. If you cannot do this, you will know what your punishment will be."

Taking a pitcher in his hand, the young man started thinking, "What shall I do now? What shall I do now? What shall I do now?" He thought for a whole day, but could not find any solution to his problem. He went on thinking for five days without any solution. Then he remembered the Padishah of Ravens. He held the raven [kutgun] charm to the fire, and a raven appeared.

"What is the trouble, oh, son of man?"

The young man explained to him, "The matter is such-and-such."

The raven said, "This is a most difficult task. Every problem can be solved but this one, but we shall try and see what we can do. Go and find a few bowls for me. Do you know where Amman is?⁸ We went there once when my father was alive. Now I am old and I do not know whether I can reach that place." But when the bird saw that the young man was in such serious trouble, it said, "Well, anyway, I shall bear the hardship of such a journey." It then tied the pitcher to its own wings and flew off to where the water of the Black Sea separates from the water of the Mediterranean. There he found Zemzem Water springing up. Lowering the pitcher into the stream, he filled it with Zemzem Water. Just as he was about to pull up the pitcher, the two seas rushed together again, and he barely lifted the pitcher out in time. The bird then flew back, bearing the pitcher, to the spot where the young man waited. Before the bird

⁸Amman is the capital of the present Heshemite Kingdom of Jordan. It is difficult to see how Amman can be considered to be the place where the water of the Black Sea separates from the water of the Mediterranean.

touched the ground, the young man held the pitcher aloft in the air, lest it break against the earth. Before he even said, "Thank you,"⁹ the young man grabbed the pitcher.

"Just a minute," said the bird. "Pour a little of that water into this bowl, and then pour it on my head." When the water was poured on the bird's head, it became a young man, fifteen years old. "Now you pour some on your head, and keep the rest to take to that cuckold who wants you to bring it to him."

The young man took the pitcher of Zemzem Water to the padishah, who poured some on his own head and became a young man again. The padishah then said, "Very well, young man, all of my wishes have been fulfilled, and you may take all of the precious stones."¹⁰

He bade them farewell and soon reached his own country. But the young man remembered that he was supposed to find a rose. The girl from the palace near the garden of Gül Gülüstan Hanım said to him, "It is easy to find the rose." At that moment, the girl smiled, and a rose appeared on her cheek.

Rose-via
smile
Smile produces
rose

⁹"Before he even said Sağ ol" is what the narrator says here. Sağ olsun is a phrase to indicate thanks, less common than Teşekkür ederim.

¹⁰The narrator is hopelessly confused at this juncture. The hero is no longer looking for precious stones. They were two quests removed. He has been seeking a rose from the garden of Gül Gülüstan Hanım, which he had plucked and started to carry home when he decided to win the daughter of the padishah who lives in the palace of the rose garden. To win her he undertakes three seemingly impossible tasks set by her father, completing the tasks successfully with the aid of animal helpers. In the meantime, what has become of the 40 sacks of cheese, 40 sacks of sorghum, and 40 sacks of meat which he has gained for the fairy girl (his 2nd wife) in order to have her go to get the rose? Plots within plots, quests within quests, tasks within tasks--these overwhelm this incompetent narrator until he is quite lost in the maze of his own motifs.

When he arrived home, they asked him what he had done and what he had seen. He said to them, "Instead of the rose, I have brought back Gül Gülistan Hanım herself."

"Good God! Good God!" they all said

The chief administrator saw that the young man now had three palace women, ^{Formal Ex.} each more beautiful than the others. He could not understand what sort of thing was happening. He said to the witch, "He has returned again!"

The witch thought and thought. She said, "There is only one way of getting rid of him. We must set him a more difficult task, something he can never accomplish."

"All right." He called the young man and said, "When my father died the keys of the palace were lost and the gates are now locked. If you cannot find them, you can think of what your plight will be."

The young man walked straight to his apartment. His wife looked at him and realized that her husband was again in trouble. "What is the matter?" she asked when he arrived home.

"Well, it is such-and-such. His father took the keys of the palace to the other world with him. Now they want me to go there and bring them back. If I cannot do this, he says that I shall be executed."

64-3 "Well, that is easy," she said. "Go and tell that cuckold to have a ^Pwell dug of such-and-such diameter, and tell him to have brought enough firewood to fill that well. Tell him that if he can do these two things, you will be able to bring him the keys."

The young man went to that official and told him what was to be done. The man gave orders to have the well dug and the firewood brought. Finally everything was ready.

With the help of the fairy girl, a tunnel was dug beneath the apartment, and in this the young man could live. He went to the palace and said, "Light the wood."¹¹

Two days after the wood in the well was burned, the fairy girl ordered the fairies to prepare forty keys made in such a way as to be able to open the doors of the locked palace. The keys were then to be taken by the young man to the official. Before he went, his wife warned him: "If this man asks you what his father is doing in the next world, you just say, 'What should he be doing? He is very disappointed with you.' If he asks, 'In what respect is he disappointed?' you say, 'He said, 'You come to visit me, although you are not related to me, while my own son has not come to see me.' You are supposed, therefore, to go and visit him there.' If he then asks, 'But how am I to do it?' you say, 'The same way I did.'"

Again wood was piled over the well and set afire. The padishah¹² disappeared in it. They waited for three days and there was no sign of him. They waited a week and there was no sign of him yet. The padishah was missing.
wanted to find a new padishah.

¹¹Although it is not very clear, the implication is that the hero can hide in the tunnel during the time he is supposedly in the other world.

¹²In this last episode the imposer of tasks, the villain, is not just the "chief administrator," but is referred to as the "padishah." In fact, from the time he mentions the palace left locked by his father, also a padishah, he seems to be a padishah. Since the wicked ruler is usually the one who imposes tasks on the hero in order to take his beautiful wife, it is not surprising that the villain here is finally called "padishah."

The person on whose head the bird landed would be made the padishah. All of the people were, accordingly, gathered in the city square. When the bird was released, it went and rested on the head of the young man. The people said, "That must have been a mistake." When the bird was again released, it again rested on the head of the young man. But the people shouted, "No! We cannot accept that!" When for a third time the released bird landed on the same head, the people said, "That is good. The finger cut by justice *Prove* ⁶ does not bleed."¹³ Then they all said to the young man, "You are now the padishah."

Of course, once he became padishah, he fired the witch and the aides in the palace. He held a wedding for Gül Gülüstan Hanım and the fairy girl, marrying both of them in a wedding that lasted for forty days and forty nights. But the daughter of the padishah he kept as a sister and did not marry her.¹⁴ He said, "I became padishah thanks to her." Then he warned his two wives, "If this sister of mine ever sighs, I shall kill both of you."

"We shall not let her do that," they promised.

This third girl's problem was very different from theirs. shall we do to prevent her from sighing?" the one wife said.

"We shall have to show her great respect," said the other.

One day that third girl was sitting by a window. Her beloved, the son

¹³This is a Turkish proverb, meaning, roughly, "What is justly done should not make anyone sorry."

¹⁴This is what the relationship should have been all along in order to tie the beginning of this tale with the ending. She has lived with the hero for a long while, however, and throughout most of that time has been called "wife."

of the Padishah of Erzurum,¹⁵ happened to walk down to the marketplace with a broken saz on his shoulder. When the girl saw him, she recognized him, and at that moment she sighed heavily, "Ah-h-h!"

When the two wives of the padishah heard this, they rushed to her, saying, "Eyvah! Why did you do that? What is the matter with you?" They then reported this to the padishah. "The matter is such-and-such," they told him. "The girl sighed."

He went to her immediately and asked, "Why did you sigh?"

"I have just seen my beloved, for whom I have waited all these years," she said.

"Where is he?" he asked. Then he had town criers go through the streets of the city announcing that the young stranger was wanted. He was found and brought to the presence of the padishah, who questioned the young man about what he was doing.

"My situation is such-and-such," he explained.¹⁶

"Would you recognize the girl if you saw her?" asked the padishah.

"Yes, I would."

Since the fairy girl was the most beautiful of the three women in his palace, he had her dressed attractively and showed her to the young man.

¹⁵In case the reader has forgotten (as the narrator seems to have forgotten), the tale began with the dream-world love affair between the daughter of the Padishah of Istanbul and the son of the Padishah of Erzurum.

¹⁶Obviously there is a great amount omitted here. Even if the whole history of the love affair were not repeated, most raconteurs would have indicated something of what the young man said to explain his situation.

"No, she is not my loved one," said the young man.

Then the padishah had Gül Gülistan Hanım richly dressed and decorated with jewels. He had her stand before the young man

"No, this is not the girl, either."

Then he had the third girl dressed in very shabby clothes. "Is this girl the one you love?"

"Yes, this is my beloved!" said the young man.

He had the two married, and he made the young man his own vizier. Their wedding lasted for forty days and forty nights. In this way the subject of this tale comes to an end.

Ahmet Uysal: "This is quite a tale. I've not heard one like it before."

Fikret Sav: "It was told to me by my grandfather, Ömeri Vasfi, who died twenty-five years ago at the age of seventy-five."

Ahmet Uysal: "Did he know other tales?"

Fikret Sav: "Yes, very many." /