

Story 1051 (1974 Tape 55)

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Location: Bakras village, re-named Ötençay, kaza of İskenderun, Hatay Province

Date: June 20, 1974

All  
The Immoral Hoca and the Daughter of the Pilgrim

Once there was a group of men who, as they began to grow old, decided to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. In that same village there lived a wealthy couple who had a son a daughter. When this family heard about the group that was forming for a pilgrimage, they decided that three of them--the father, the mother, and the son--would join the pilgrims. They were worried, however, about the care of their daughter, Gülistan, while they were away. They wondered with whom they could entrust this girl. Then they decided to call upon the hoca,<sup>1</sup> for he was the most important and most protective person in their village. "Hoca, Hoca," they said, "we are going on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and we shall entrust the care of our daughter to you while we are away."

"All right," he said. "You can travel without any worry about that, and I shall protect your daughter during absence."

<sup>1</sup>A hoca is a Moslem preacher, similar to a priest or minister.

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locked the girl in a room and said to her, "You are never to go outside this room. Whatever you need will be brought to you by the hoca and passed in to you through that window." Then, having attended to that matter, they turned away and joined the group of pilgrims.

For a couple of days the hoca went to the girl and asked, "My girl, do you need anything? If you do, we shall buy it at the marketplace for you."

One day she said, "Buy me this or that to eat.

The hoca bought the food and passed it in through the window, but when he saw the beautiful hand that reached for it, he fell down in a faint. When he came to his senses, he thought, "Oh, God, how could there ever be such a beautiful hand? What shall I do? I shall never be satisfied now until I possess that girl. Let me see how I can do that." He thought of evil things and shameful things that were insulting to the girl. After having such thoughts for a few days, he went to a witch<sup>2</sup> woman and said, "There is a girl living in such-and-such a house.

<sup>2</sup>In the Turkish oral tradition the word witch (cadı) often has connotations different from those it has in the West. A witch may be an evil person in league with Satan. He/she may be ghoulish to the extent of eating newly buried corpses. On the other hand, he/she may simply be a shrewd, perceptive, and scheming person available, for the right price, to carry out underhanded activities and immoral machinations.

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If you can arrange to have me possess that girl, I shall give you a great amount of money. In fact, I shall give you all I have."

After they had agreed upon an actual amount, the witch woman said, "All right, if you will pay me half of that amount in advance, I shall at once undertake this task." The hoca gave her that amount.

The following day the witch went to the house where the girl lived and knocked on the door. "My girl! My girl!" she shouted.

"What are you saying, old lady?" asked Gülistan "Do you need anything? Do you need money? If so, I can give you some, and then you can go away."

"No, I do not need anything," the witch answered. "I heard that your father had gone on a pilgrimage, and I wanted to go to the same place. I want to know when he will be back, and so I decided to come and talk with you."

"Very well," said the girl. "If you know my father, then it is all right for you to come in."

After they had talked for a while, the witch said, "My girl, let me take you to a public bath. We can bathe there and afterwards go for a stroll. What will you do with yourself if you stay here alone day after day? I

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have girls of my own who are just like you."

"No, I cannot go. My father ordered me not to leave this house."

"Oh, for the love of God, let us go to the bath anyway. I can arrange to have my daughters there too tomorrow." Finally, with all of her talk, she persuaded the girl to go to the bath on the following day. Then she said, "Goodbye! I'll come back to get you tomorrow."

Running then to the hoca, the witch woman said, "Hoca, hoca, I have <sup>tricked</sup> the girl into going to the bath tomorrow. It is such-and-such a bath. You be sure to be there!" The hoca went at once to the owner of the bath and rented the entire bath for all of the next day.

On the following day the witch took the girl to the bath. The hoca was already there, and as soon as Gülistan entered, he locked the door. Then he said, "Because of you I have gone mad! I have fallen in love with you, and today you will be mine here and now. No one but God will see us in here. Whether you are willing or unwilling, you will be mine."

Realizing that there was no way in which she could immediately escape, the girl answered, "Very well. I have been attracted to you too. But let us first bathe and get

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ourselves thoroughly clean, and then we shall do whatever you want. First you sit down, and I shall scrub you."

Because the hoca had a long beard and a lot of hair, the girl used two bars of soap to make a high pile of suds on top of his head. There was so much soap flowing down that the hoca could not open his eyes. The girl then took off her wooden bath clogs and began beating him over the head with them. She beat so hard and so long that the hoca finally fell unconscious to the floor. She then found the key in his clothes, unlocked the door, and escaped. She ran straight to her own house, entered it, and locked the door behind her.

When the hoca came to himself, he was gravely worried about what had happened. He thought, "If the girl tells her father about this when he returns, I shall no longer be able to live in this village, for he is the most powerful man here." After thinking about this for a while, he decided to write a letter to her father. Taking pen and paper, he wrote, "Pilgrim Fadıl, since your departure, your daughter's house has become worse than a brothel. Ten people enter and twenty come out! Come back and do something to restore your honor. Otherwise your pilgrimage may be of no use to you!"

*Beating**Accusation  
Tale*

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In five or ten days the letter reached the girl's father, who was by then near the end of his trip. After reading the bad news from the hoca, the father called his son and said, "Mount your horse and ride home at once, arriving there before we do. Cut your sister into pieces and bring me back as evidence some of her blood and bones. Otherwise, I can never return to that village again."

The boy mounted his horse and started for home. Along the way, however, he kept wondering if all the evil news about his sister was really true. In order to determine this, he decided to hide somewhere outside his sister's house and watch it day and night. "Also," he said to himself, "I shall go to her door and tell her that I am young, handsome, and rich. If she opens the door, then I will cut her up. Otherwise I shall not harm her."

Day after day the boy went to his sister's house and knocked on the door. ~~He went there in the morning.~~ He went there at noon. He went there at night. At no time was the door ever opened. "All that was said about her must have been a lie. If it were true, then she would open the door to me too." He went again to his sister's house, knocked on the door, and called, "Sister, Sister, this is your brother Ali." When she opened the door for

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her brother, he said, "My sister, I have orders from our father to cut you to pieces. If I do not do as he ordered, he will never forgive me."

"Very well, Ali. You are my older brother, and you can kill me if you wish."

is my father's order. I have no choice."

He took her to the top of a mountain to kill her, but when the time came, he said, "Oh, girl, why should I sacrifice you when you have not committed any sin? I shall kill instead a wild animal. Then I shall smear its blood on your shirt and take that to my father as evidence of your death. May God look after you! What can I do? This is your fate."

*Blood  
garment*

killed a wild animal on the mountain and smeared its blood on his sister's shirt. Then, leaving his sister there on the mountain, he returned to meet his father. He said, "Father, here is my sister's shirt soaked in her blood. I killed her and have brought this shirt to you."

Thank you, son. You have done your duty well.

In the meantime, the girl wandered about on the mountain looking for a place to spend the night that would be safe from all the wild animals that lived there. After a while she found a huge tree growing alongside a fountain.

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Climbing into that tree she slept there. The fountain beneath the tree was a place where the Syrian padişah's son always watered his horse when he was hunting on that mountain. In the morning the son of the padişah came along with his hunting companions to water their horses there. But when the prince's horse saw the image of the girl on the surface of the water, it refused to drink from the fountain. The prince asked his horse, "What is the matter with you? You have always drunk from this fountain before. Why don't you drink from it now?" He pushed the animal's head into the water, but as he did so, he too saw on the surface of the water the image of a girl as beautiful as the moon.<sup>3</sup> The prince said, "Are you a human being or a jinn?"<sup>4</sup> Come down!"

"I am a human being," the girl answered as she climbed down from the tree

Turning to his companions, the prince said, "Friends, I have completed my hunt. Farewell to all of you!" Then

<sup>3</sup>In the Middle East where the moon is revered as a symbol of beauty, it is very high praise to compare a mortal woman to that satellite. The literal translation is " . . . a girl whose beauty was so great that it said to the moon, 'Don't bother to rise! I shall shine in your place.'"

<sup>4</sup>The traditional formula here is inmisin cinmisin?

Beauty  
of the water

eff



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placing the girl behind him on the horse, he rode with her to Syria. When they arrived there, he went to his father and said, "Father, I found this girl on a mountain where I went hunting. She is very beautiful, and I intend to marry her."

"I found you several fine girls, but you didn't want them. Now you have found this girl on a mountain. I am afraid that she will not be suitable for you."

"Well, I shall marry her anyway." Soon after they were married following a wedding ceremony that lasted for forty days and forty nights. But then something strange happened to the girl. She grew mute and seemed unable to utter a word. Five years passed and she still remained mute. No matter what they did, they were not able to get a word out of her mouth.

As time passed, she had children--one, two, three. Women sing lullabies to children sleeping in their cradles, and one day the padişah heard the sound of a woman's voice singing in the next room. (As you know, the sounds of money, water, and women's voices are all sweet. The voice that the padişah heard was the kind that goes through one's lungs.<sup>5</sup> "Where is that voice coming from?" he won-

<sup>5</sup>In the West it would be the heart that was affected. Other cultures consider the lungs, the liver, and even the gall bladder to be the primary organs of sentiment.

*Mute*

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dered. "It seems to be coming from my son's room, but his wife is mute." Opening the door and entering the room, he saw the woman singing and crying at the cradle. "My girl, do you really have a tongue? Let ten camels and 100 sheep be slain as a sacrifice of thanks for the fact that my son's wife can now speak!"

After Gülistan had stopped singing, the padişah asked her, "My girl, do you have a mother and father?"

"Of course I do! Did you think that I sprang forth from a rock?"

"Where are you from?"

"I am the daughter of a man who lives at Antakya in Hatay.

"Would you like to visit your father?"

"Of course I should, if you will send me there. It has been a long time since I have seen my own country, and I should like to talk with my mother, father, and brother."

"We shall not accompany you, for I shall not go to a place I know nothing about. Nor shall I permit my son to go either. But I shall give you a squadron of soldiers led by a captain to accompany you.

"All right," she said.

A squadron of troops was prepared and provided with

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arms, food, and other supplies. A captain was then appointed to lead this squadron. To this captain the padi-

said, "You are to take her to her own country where she will visit her mother and father. Afterwards you to bring her back safely. Let us see whether or not she really has a mother and father." He did not permit his son to go, but he said to Gülistan, "Take the children along with you. You would miss them too much if you left them here."

*Fondai  
effendi*

Packing many things that were light in weight but heavy in value,<sup>6</sup> Gülistan and her children mounted their mules and began their journey. (In the old days there were no planes, cars, or buses. People traveled on camels and other animals.) After they had gone quite a distance, they came to a mountain top, and there the captain ordered that tents be pitched. "There is water here, and it looks

a good place to camp. Pitch the tents, and we shall here for the night." He had the girl's tent pitched apart from the others, for he thought, "When night falls, shall go to her tent and be with her." So the poor girl was insulted for the second time.

<sup>6</sup>This is a very common expression, not only in Turkish folktales but also in modern parlance in Turkey.

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When it was fully dark, he took his sword, went to her tent and opened the front flap. He said to her, "Well, my girl, take off your clothes.

"Why?" she asked.

He said, "Why should you sleep only with your husband? You will be my wife on this journey, and I shall deliver you to your real husband when we return."

"I shall never do such a bad thing!" she replied.

"You had better or I shall cut up one of your children."

"Do so," she said.

Cutting apart one of her children, he said, "Now will sleep with me or I shall cut up a second child."

"Do so," she said.

Cutting up another child, he said, "Now you will accept me or I shall cut up your third child."

"Do so. Cut up my smallest child."

After he had cut up the smallest child, he said, it is your turn. You will either lie with me or I shall cut you up too

"Very well," she said. "I shall accept you, but first I must go take my ablutions and pray. After that I shall do as you wish."

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right, but I shall tie a rope around your waist so that you cannot escape

The woman went outside and walked a short distance away. Then she slipped the rope from her waist, tied it to a large tree, and ran off into the forest.

After a short while the captain pulled on the rope but was unable to draw the woman toward him. "Oh, God," he said. "Has she been staked to the ground? If not, what has happened to her?" Taking his sword in hand, he went outside and found that the other end of the rope had been tied to a tree. There was no sign of the woman anywhere.

In order to avoid arousing any suspicion about his behavior, the captain then returned to his tent for the rest of the night. In the morning, he ordered the ~~tents~~ to be struck and packed for traveling. "Be sure to pack up the lady's tent too," he said

When the soldiers went to that tent, however, they could not see any activity there. Looking inside the tent, they discovered that the woman was missing and that the cut up bodies of her three children lay inside. "Captain, the lady is not here!" they called

"Alas!" he said. "One who comes from the mountains

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will go back to the mountains again! The padişah's son found her on a mountain top, a wild woman. Now she has killed her children and run away into the mountains again! What can I do about it? Let us pack up all of our equipment and supplies and return." Returning to the padişah, the captain said, "What else can be expected from a girl who was found in the mountains, my padişah? When she saw her former surroundings, she killed her children during the night and fled into the mountains. The soldiers were all there, and so all this is no fault of mine

"Didn't I say so?" asked the padişah. "One who comes from the mountains will return to the mountains! We never knew for certain whether she was fairy, human being, or demon. Didn't I say that she would never be a suitable wife for my son?"

While everyone was in mourning, the girl's husband wondered what had really happened to his wife. In the meantime, let us see what the girl was doing, where she went, and what happened to her. After she escaped from the camp, she ran from this place to that place until it was morning. Seeing a flock of sheep in a field at dawn she went to the shepherd and said, "Hello, shepherd."

"Hello."

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"If I give you some gold and my dress, will you give me your outer clothing?"

"Of course Why shouldn't

"Also, I must buy a sheep from you, regardless of what the price might be. The meat will be yours, but the stomach will be mine."

"All right."

They slaughtered a sheep. The girl cleaned out its stomach and then put the skin covering of the stomach over her head like a hat. With the aid of that skin on her head and the shepherd's shabby clothes covering the rest of her body, she looked very much like a keloğlan. "Keloğlan come, Keloğlan go!"<sup>8</sup>

The girl was unacquainted with any country except her own, but she had come close to her own country by the time all these evil things had happened to her. She finally

<sup>7</sup>Keloğlan means literally bald boy, but the baldness is not the loss of hair brought on by age. It is caused by ringworm infestation of the scalp. It is abetted by uncleanness, and so it seems to affect most often the younger and poorly tended children of peasant families. The skin covering the girl's hair gives her the appearance of a keloğlan--a popular disguise in many Turkish folktales.

<sup>8</sup>The lowly keloğlan has absolutely no status and is a kind of step-and-fetch-it figure. The real keloğlan (not the one pretending to that condition) acquires shrewdness, ingenuity, and perseverance, and he becomes a definite character type in the folktale.

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reached the place where her father lived, but once there, where was she to stay and what was she to say? As she was lying and resting at a corner in that village, she saw an old man who was a helva<sup>9</sup> maker. He made good helva, but flies covered one half of it and worms ate the other half, and so nobody bought his helva. When the girl arrived there, the old man was again making helva. He said, "Keloğlan, get away from here! There were already too many flies here, but now there are even more because of your bald head!"

"My master, please don't send me away," said the girl "I'll not do any harm here but instead I'll clean away the dirt and wash your shop."

"All right, then, wash it and I shall watch you work. I am an old man anyway with no one to look after me. I have barely enough strength to leave my chair and stand up."

Keloğlan cleaned the shop and washed all of the equipment so that everything looked much more attractive. On the following day he found some paint and painted the place. Then Keloğlan said, "Uncle, I shall make a batch of helva

<sup>9</sup>A popular Turkish candy or confection made of sesame oil, various finely ground cereals, plus honey or syrup.



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you, and then we shall sell it." She made a very large batch of helva that was so delicious that even those who did not usually eat helva enjoyed it.

When the old man first saw the huge amount of helva she had made, he said, "What have you done, Keloğlan? We cannot possibly sell this much helva."

"Don't worry, uncle. You will see that we can sell all of it

She was right. The helva sold so fast that it was all gone before noon. The following day they made four times that amount of helva, and it lasted only until the early evening.

The old man was greatly pleased. He said, "Oh, there is something very special about you! Everyone is talking about the delicious helva that you make!" Well, let them make and sell helva for a while as we take a look at what the padişah's son was doing.

The son of the Padişah of Syria said, "I am going to my wife. Wherever she went, I shall find her

"I shall go with you," said the padişah

Accompanied by the same squadron of soldiers and the same captain, they began to search for the lady. The soldiers showed them where they had pitched their tents on

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the mountain top and the place from which the lady had fled. They searched here and there along the way for her, and they finally reached the woman's village. There they asked, "Who is the wealthiest man here?"

"Pilgrim Fadıl<sup>10</sup> is the wealthiest man in this village. He has a mansion. You should stay with him while you are here.

They went to Pilgrim Fadıl's home and stayed there. Thus the padişah, his son, and the captain all stayed in the home of Gülistan's father. That evening after dinner, Pilgrim Fadıl said, "Call the young helva maker and we shall have him make helva here to serve to our guests.

When Keloğlan received the summons from Pilgrim Fadıl, she went to her father's house. As soon as she entered the house, she saw her husband among those present, and she wanted to rush to him and embrace him, but she did not do so. She next recognized that another of the guests was her father-in-law. Then she saw that a third guest was the villainous captain who had slain her children and tried to dishonor her. Gülistan was amazed to encounter

<sup>10</sup> Once a person has completed the pilgrimage to Mecca, he/she has the honorific word Pilgrim placed before his/her first name. He/she retains this title, conferred by general assent, for the remainder of his/her life.

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all of these people in the same house

The Keloğlan made the helva and placed it in the midst of the people gathered there.<sup>11</sup> As they were eating this, the padişah asked, "Doesn't anyone here know any stories of past events in this village which he could tell to entertain us tonight?" He was seeking clues about his son's lost wife

"We do not know any such stories," the other guests replied.

"Doesn't anyone know any old stories?" he asked again  
Keloğlan then spoke up and said, "I do, sir. I know some good stories."

"Come, then, and entertain us this evening." (There was no radio or television in those days, and so people passed the time listening to stories and singing songs.)

"Sir, I shall tell you a story, but I should like to request that you first have the village hoca brought here too."

"All right," they said, and they sent a man to fetch

<sup>11</sup>At such a gathering people would be sitting cross-legged on the floor. The helva tray would be placed at their center on a very low, small table known as a sofra. The surface of the sofra is raised only 4-6 inches above the floor to be within easy reach of those seated on the floor. Thus the helva would be literally in the midst of the guests, not just in the middle of the room.

the hoca.

After the hoca had arrived, Keloğlan said, "Sir, there is also a woman who lives in such-and-such a house whom you should bring here, if you please."

"All right," they said again, and they then brought the witch woman to the gathering.

Keloğlan then started his story. He told everything that had happened to Gülistan since the time that her parents and brother had departed from home to go to Mecca.<sup>12</sup> He told everything that the hoca had done to Gülistan and everything that the captain had done to her. As the story went on, the captain asked, "May I have permission to leave? I must go to the toilet."

"Ask Keloğlan," they said

"No!" said the keloğlan.

Then others wanted to leave too. The hoca said, "I must go to pray."

"I need to leave in order to do something," said the witch.

"No, no one may leave the room!" said the keloğlan.

<sup>12</sup>The tale is truncated here. Ordinarily the maligned girl retells the whole set of experiences through which she has suffered. Most ATON variants have this fuller treatment. Regaling the audience with these details is expected and enjoyed in a culture that has plenty of time.

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At the end of the story Keloğlan said, "I am really a keloğlan or a boy. I am a girl." Taking the sheep's stomach off her head, she embraced her husband. Then she said, "These two men tried to dishonor me, and the second, the captain, killed my children."

The padişah summoned his executioners and ordered that the hoca, the witch woman, and the captain be beheaded. The three were executed right there and then. The padişah then took his son and daughter-in-law and returned with them to his own country. There they ate and drank and had all of their wishes fulfilled.

if you have not been as fortunate as they, I can at least wish health to the ears of those who heard this tale and health to the tongue of him who told it

To be  
few I  
as done