

Story #649 (1976, Tape #16)

Narrator: Nesim Zihni Karnat

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The Padişah, His Three Sons, and the Golden Apples

There was once a padişah who had three sons. In the garden of the palace there grew a single apple tree which each year bore a single golden apple. However, the padişah had never been able to pick this golden apple, for on the night that it appeared, a giant -- two-headed giant would come to the palace garden, take the apple, and disappear with it.

One year the oldest of the padişah's sons told his father that he would wait for the golden apple to appear on that special night, at the palace garden, and he would then bring it to him. He took a sword from his father's vast collection and went to wait the golden apple to appear. Unfortunately, the oldest son fell asleep during the night, and when the golden apple appeared, the two-headed giant came and took it away with him.

The next year when it was time for the golden apple to appear on the apple tree, the padişah's second son went to his father and told him that he would go and wait for the apple this time. So the second son went out to the palace garden, but some time during the night, before the apple appeared, he too fell asleep. Again the two-headed giant came, got the golden apple, and went away.

The third year, the youngest son went to his father and told

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Padişah - sons of -- three

golden apple -- stolen

#649 sons -- three

#649 apples -- golden

giant -- two-headed giant would come to the palace garden, take the apple, Son -- oldest brother -- " Son -- middle

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that -- of golden apple

Son -- oldest -- fell asleep -- while on watch

brother -- oldest -- Same as above

Son -- middle -- fell asleep -- while on watch

brother -- middle -- Same as above

son -- youngest -- succeeds a task -- at which older sons failed
brother -- " " " " " " 92
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him he would go and wait for the golden apple, and he did. During the night the youngest son grew very sleepy, but he was careful not to fall asleep. When the golden apple appeared on the tree, the two-headed giant also appeared in the palace garden by the tree.

The youngest son was prepared for the giant's appearance, and he swung his sword and cut off one of the giant's heads. He then quickly picked the gold apple off the tree, and as the creature stumbled out of the garden with blood flowing all over him, youngest son took the apple to his father. The youngest son told his father that he wanted to pursue the giant and kill him.

father said to him that he was too young to go off by himself, but that he could go if his brothers would go with him. *blood -- trail of -- left by wounded giant*

Accordingly, all three brothers went to find the giant, following the trail of blood he had left behind. After following the trail for quite a while, they came to a well. The bloody trail went all the way into the well. This well looked quite deep, and it had a *fire -- burning at bottom of well* fire burning at the very bottom of it.¹ The oldest son said that he would go down. They found a rope and lowered him into the well, but when he came close to the fire, he shouted, "I am burning! I cannot stand it. Pull me up!" And this they did.

¹In Turkish folktales the word well does not always signify a water source. Just as often it indicates an entrance to the underworld. Heroes who travel to the underworld almost always do so via a "well."

The second then said that he would go down, and the other two lowered him into the well. But when he came close to the fire, he too could not stand the heat and asked to be pulled up.

When the second son had come up to the surface, the youngest son said that he would go down. He told his brothers not to pull him up when he shouted to be hauled out but to lower him farther. This they did. When the youngest son came close to the fire and felt he could not stand the heat, he shouted to be pulled up, but the two brothers, as instructed, quickly lowered him farther down into the well. The youngest son suddenly found himself touching ground in an underworld palace with three huge iron doors.

three iron doors
doors-iron--three

palace -- underground --
with three iron doors

In that palace there were three young girls who lived in three separate rooms. The two-headed giant had brought them to the palace and had made them his wives, but none knew of the others' existence. The giant also had his own private room. Since he had just had one head cut off, he had gone to his room and lain down with his eyes open.

three girls
girls--three

After the boy had slept for a while, he opened one of the doors and discovered a very pretty girl. She asked him what he was doing there, and warned him to hide quickly, because the giant would devour him if he saw him. The youngest son opened another door, and a second girl came out, and then a third from a third door. They were astonished to discover each other. The youngest son asked where the giant was, and one of the women said that she

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had heard him entering his own room. They all went to the door of the giant's room, but the women said that the giant would eat them if they were to go into his room. The youngest son said that he would not be eaten. When he was about to enter the room, one of the women advised him to watch the giant's eyes. "If his eyes are ^{giant--asleep} open, that means the giant is asleep. If they are closed, you had ^{when eyes are} better beware, for that will mean that the giant is awake."² ^{giant--awake when eyes are closed}

The youngest son of the padişah went into the giant's room

and saw that his eyes were open.

and quickly cut off his second head.

Then he did the same with the second oldest woman.

tying the rope on the youngest and prettiest girl, she gave him a ^{girl--in underworld} lock of her hair and told him if he had any difficulty leaving the ^{gives her magic} ^{lock of hair--} underground palace, he should rub her lock of hair, and he would ^{which, if rubbed,} get assistance in leaving. Then the youngest son shouted to his ^{will bring him} ^{magic assistance} brothers to pull up his own fate, and this they did.

When his two brothers saw the young girl, however, they felt ^{hair--lock of--} ^{magic--given} ^{to have--by girl} ^{in underworld} angry at the youngest son for saving for himself the youngest and prettiest girl. Therefore, when he was halfway up, they cut

²Open-eyed sleep and closed-eyed wakefulness is a folktale convention.

³Kismet is that which fate sends one.

^{brothers--older--~~leave~~ abandon} youngest brother in well (underworld)
Well (underworld) -- youngest brother abandoned in -- by older brothers
^{sons -- oldest -- abandon} youngest son -- in well (underworld)

brothers older
 brother

brother -- youngest --
 kills two-headed
 giant

magic hair -- lock of --
 given to her --
 by girl in
 underworld

the rope, and he plunged back down to the bottom of the well.

The older brothers took the three girls and departed for their father's palace.

girls -- three

The youngest son, finding himself on the bottom of the well, underground, ^{prayer} prayed to God for help. Soon ^{rams -- two} two rams appeared, one

ram -- supernatural -- white of which was white and the other black. The youngest girl had warned him before ascending⁴ that the white ram would carry him straight up, and that the black ram would take him yet seven fathoms lower. But the youngest son in his haste and anxiety, forgot the girl's advice and jumped on the black ram's back. He immediately found himself seven fathoms below the level of the well floor.

fathoms -- seven

When he arrived there he found himself to be very tired and

nest -- of hawk very hot. As he lay under a tree in a valley, he saw in a high branch a hawk's nest with three baby hawks in it. He also saw a snake going up the tree to eat the baby hawks. This snake looked down all at once and seeing a human being, threw itself off the tree onto the ground in order to seize the youngest son and devour him instead of the baby hawks. The youngest son quickly

hawks -- baby three

drew his sword and killed the snake. Feeling even more tired, he

lay down and fell asleep at once. *Son -- youngest -- kills snake threatening baby hawks*

Snake -- threatening baby hawks -- killed by youngest son

⁴ Obviously this information should have been given earlier. The narrator forgot it until he needed it.

Meanwhile, the baby hawks' mother flew back to the tree. When she saw a human being, she prepared to attack and kill him. but the baby hawks cried out and told their mother that he had saved them from the snake who was about to devour them. The mother hawk felt very grateful towards the sleeping boy, and spreading her wings over him, she protected him from the sun and let him sleep. *Hawk -- mother -- protects sleeping hero from sun by spreading wings over him*

When the youngest son awoke, he saw the huge hawk⁵ over him and started up. But the hawk spoke to him and asked him what his greatest wish was. The boy told the hawk that she could not grant him his wish, but he thanked her just the same. Upon hearing this, the hawk said, "If you should ever need my assistance, young man, come and find me."

The boy took the road towards a town that he could see in the distance and came to an *woman -- old* woman's home. He asked her for a drink, and the grandmother gave him a glass of water to drink. The youngest son saw that there were bugs at the bottom of the glass and asked, "Grnadmother, why are there bugs in the water?"

She said, "There is a two-headed giant that lives at the *giant -- two-headed -- Controls water supply of village* source of our water. He appears each year, selects the youngest and prettiest girl of our village, eats her, and leaves our water supply open to us for just two hours. The villagers get as much *giant -- two-headed -- requires annual human sacrifice for*

⁵The bird here called "hawk" is obviously far larger than a hawk. It is an anka or a rukh (roc), one of the fabulous giant birds of Middle Eastern folklore.

water during that time as they can and store it in large jars,
 our water often gets bugs in it during the year. Son, tomorrow
 is the day on which the giant will receive the padişah's daughter
 as this year's victim. It is the only way by which the village
 can get water. If she is not delivered to him, he will not let us
 have any water. Many of our brave young men have fought with the
 giant, but none could vanquish him. Instead, they were all de-
 voured by him."

Handwritten notes:
 padişah -- daughter
 at -- to be fed
 to two-headed giant
 daughter -- at
 the padişah -- to be fed
 to two-headed
 giant

The youngest son asked to be taken to the site where the daughter of the padişah was to be given to the giant. The whole village was at the central open space of the village. Some were crying for and others were crying out of compassion for the girl about to be devoured, for she was the prettiest girl of the village. They brought the girl so that they might have their yearly ration of water.

The youngest son sprang forward and declared he would fight the giant. The villagers tried to dissuade him, telling him that it was of no use, that others who had been larger and stronger than he had also tried, only to be eaten up by the giant. Nevertheless, the youngest son would not desist.

There was a huge tree near the place where the giant would appear, and the girl had been tied to it. The youngest son asked the girl to hold onto his waist. He then drew his sword and challenged the giant. The giant became angry at the delay of his anticipated meal. He inhaled deeply and thought he would eat the

youngest son also with relish. When the giant exhaled, even the roots of the huge tree shook. The boy bravely fought the giant. He was able to chop off one of his heads, and he continued to fight the wounded giant valiantly. Finally he succeeded in chopping off his second head. ^{Son -- youngest -- kills two-headed giant}

The people of the ^{Giant -- two-headed -- killed by youngest son (brother)} village could not believe their eyes. They rejoiced at the victory over the giant, and at the release of their water supply. The padişah of this land asked to have the youngest son brought to his golden palace, ^{palace -- of gold} and placed in a room. He was brought to the padişah's presence, and the padişah asked him what he could do for him. The youngest son told him that there was nothing he wished for, that he could do nothing for him. The padişah then suggested that the youngest son marry his daughter. He even offered to abdicate from his throne and let the youngest son reign over the land and the golden palace.

The boy declined the padişah's offer. He said he would walk around for a little while, and come back. He went out of the palace, and wandered off to the valley. There he found the hawk whose young he had saved from certain death, and he said to her, "Take me up from this depth and carry me up to the world above."

The hawk agreed to take the boy up, but she asked him to bring her forty batmans⁶ of meat and forty batmans⁶ of wine. The boy went ^{batmans -- forty -- of meat} ^{batmans -- forty -- of wine} ^{meat -- 6, forty batmans of} ^{wine -- forty batmans of}

A batman is a unit of weight which varies with time and place between 5.5 and 22 pounds.

back to the golden palace, and asked the padişah to provide forty batmans of meat and forty batmans of wine for him. The padişah immediately took measures to fill the boy's request. When the wine and meat were ready, they brought the supplies to the valley.

The hawk's wings were each forty meters in length. The padişah's men arranged the food containers under each wing of the hawk.

The hawk told the youngest son to mount on her back, and to give her a batman of wine when she said "Get up" and a batman of meat when she said "Smell."⁷ [The two Turkish words Kald and Kok, respectively, alliterate in Turkish.]

They flew out of the valley, and each time the hawk said "Get

up," the boy gave her wine; and each time she said "Smell," he gave her a batman of meat. Thus their journey continued for thirty-nine days. On the fortieth day the food supply was exhausted. The hawk became aware of this fact, but still she said, "Smell." Thereupon the boy cut a piece of flesh from his foot and gave it to the hawk. The hawk realized that the meat was human flesh, and slipped it under its tongue. And so, the hawk struggled up-

ward to the world above, advancing two meters, and slipping back one. When they arrived to the upper world, the hawk directed the

⁷The two directions alliterate and have near-rhyme in Turkish. Get up is kald, and smell is kok.

Hawk -- holds under tongue flesh hawk had
it -- and restores flesh to foot

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boy to get off and start walking towards his home. The youngest son said to the hawk that he would rather see her fly off. But the hawk refused to be the first to depart, and so the boy slowly tried to limp off along the way homeward. The hawk understood what had happened and called him back, saying, "I know why you are limping. When the supplies were finished and I said "Smell," you cut a piece of flesh from your foot and gave it to me." *Cure -- magic -- flesh cut from hawk's foot to feed hawk - restored to foot*

She then took the piece of flesh she had slipped under her tongue and carefully placing it back on the boy's foot, sealed the flesh with her saliva. The boy's foot was immediately healed. The hawk then spread her wings and started on her journey back down to the world below. *Magic cure -- flesh cut by hawk from own foot -- to feed hawk -- is restored to foot*

At that very time there were wedding preparations going on at the padişah's palace. The two older brothers who had brought back the girls from the mouth of the well were now preparing to wed them. One of the chief viziers was to perform the wedding ceremony. The second son was to wed the youngest and prettiest of the girls. The oldest was preparing to marry the second youngest girl that the two-headed giant of the golden apples had captured. In this land, *for -- lasting three years* wedding preparations and festivities lasted for three years. *three years -- of wedding preparations*

Meanwhile, the youngest son was a long way from his father's palace. He started to walk on his journey home. After a while he came across a baker. His father had ordered the bakers of the land to bake the very best bread ever to be baked on earth. And the

bread -- best ever baked

Story #649 bakers -- to be decapitated -- it they failed 101 to ^{more} ~~more~~
decapitation -- at bakers ^{best bread ever baked} -- it they failed to ^{more} best bread ever baked
padişah had decreed that he would have all the bakers' heads

chopped off if they could not produce the superior bread requested.

The bakers were pondering on how to achieve that feat when the youngest son went into a baker's shop, and asked to be hired as a helper. At first the baker told him to get out. He said that all the bakers were busy trying to decide how to produce the most wonderful bread on earth, which the padişah had ordered, and that he, a mere apprentice, could not be of any assistance to them at this point.

The youngest son declared he could bake the required bread. The baker did not take him seriously, and told him he should move along, for he was, after all, only a boy. When the boy insisted he could indeed produce the best bread ever, the baker asked him how he would bake it. The youngest son told the baker that he should lock him in a room with a sack of flour, yeast, and water. And he also requested food to eat every day. The baker consented, and so the youngest son was locked up and given the required baking ingredients and food. The baker, however, watched the youngest son from a hole in the door. For thirty-nine days, the boy ate and slept and did nothing else. On the fortieth day he mixed the ingredients, made dough, and then rubbed the lock of hair which the youngest girl of the underground dwelling had given him. The bread he baked was the most delicious bread ever to be baked in the world. The baker was ecstatic with joy, and he gave the youngest son many gifts.

① The boy took them and continued on his way, and the baker took the

Typist: To one
set of these →
for bread -- as
shown. The ② do
under set for
hair. (See next
page for hair).

Son -- youngest -- rubs lock of magic hair -- and is enabled to
produce best bread ever baked

Have -- rubs lock (etc)

Forty days -- given to youngest son -- to produce best bread ever baked

Days -- forty.

Helva makers -- to be decapitated -- if they failed to make
best helva ever produced

Story #649 Decapitation -- of helva maker -- if they did not make
best helva ever produced

bread to the padişah's palace

Meanwhile, the boy met a helva⁸ maker along the way. He asked the helva maker if he would hire him as a helper. The helva maker said he could not be of any assistance since he was just a boy, and that all the confectioners had a serious problem on their hands. They had to make the best helva ever or their heads would be chopped off by the padişah. The boy told the man that he could make the best helva ever, and the helva maker, thinking that he had nothing to lose, hired him. Once again the youngest son had himself locked in a room. He did nothing for thirty-nine days, but on the fortieth day he put the ingredients together and produced the most delicious helva ever made by man. The helva maker was overjoyed with the results of the boy's toil, and he took the helva to the padişah's palace.

The youngest son continued on his way, and after a while he came upon a jeweler. He asked the jeweler if he could not help him. He also said that the padişah of the land had ordered a golden rooster, hen, and baby chickens placed on a golden tray. The rooster was to walk about, the golden hen was to lay golden eggs, and the baby chicks were to feed and move around. The jeweler exclaimed in despair, "How

can we ever fill the padişah's order?" ^{Test: To produce golden tray -- on which golden rooster walked, golden hen laid golden eggs, and golden chicks pecked food.}

The boy declared that he could make the required order. He asked to be locked in a room and given gold, a sack of hazel nuts, and a sack of raisins. The jeweler did as he was asked and provided the requested supplies.

Forty day -- given to youngest son (hero) -- to produce golden tray on which golden rooster walks, golden hen lays golden eggs, and golden chick pecks food
Story #649 *Magic lock of hair -- used by youngest son (hero) -- to produce* *(same as above)*
Hair -- magic -- lock of -- (same as above)

nothing but eat and sleep for thirty-nine days. On the fortieth, he molded the golden rooster, hen, and baby chicks, and then rubbed the girl's lock over them. The rooster walked about, the hen laid eggs, and the baby chickens fed themselves. The jeweler was very happy to see the result of the boy's work. The jeweler ran to the palace, delivered the padişah's order, and was greatly relieved that he would not have his head chopped off.

palace -- golden -- seven-storied
The boy approached his father's palace. The youngest and prettiest girl he had rescued from the well was at the middle window of the seven-storied golden palace. She looked out smiling, for she knew that her *husband -- destined* husband was approaching. He, in turn, also knew that his *bride -- destined* fated bride would not wed anyone else, but he did not yet reveal himself.

The palace yard was very, very large. All the people of the land were gathered there for the celebrations, for there were to be bull fights and spear fights in which men who had never been beaten were going to compete. The padişah sat on a golden throne *throne -- of gold* among his viziers. When the competitions were over, there were five champions in five different fields. Two of the champions were the padişah's two older sons. The youngest son went to the padişah's Grand Vizier and told him he could defeat the champions of the five different fields, for he was an expert in every field. The vizier told the boy that he could not possibly compete with these champions, that they were the very best in the world, and that if they were ever to grip him, they

could break every bone in his body. The boy insisted that he could fight the champions and asked to be taken to the padişah's presence. When this was done, he bowed down before the padişah and asked to wrestle the champion wrestler. The padişah looked down on the boy in ^{humor -- good} good humor, and said, "Son, you cannot compete with the champion wrestler, for he is the strongest man on earth. He would break you with no effort."

The boy insisted that he could defeat the champion wrestler, ^{Son -- youngest -- disguised -- defeats older son} at wrestling -- ^{aid of magic hair} who happened to be one of his brothers. Of course, he relied on ^{Brother -- youngest -- same as above} the lock of hair which the girl had given him. The two brothers came forth to the middle of the arena, and the youngest brought his ^{magic hair -- used by youngest son -- to defeat older brother} brother down with the first grapple. And then the youngest called ^{son at wrestling} out, "And now, my padişah, I want the bull."

They brought the bull into the ring and the youngest son grabbed ^{Son -- youngest -- defeats bull -- with aid of magic hair} the bull by one horn with his left hand and forced it to the ground. Next he asked to compete with the champion jirit⁹ player, and he de- ^{Brother -- same as above} feated his other brother at the jirit game. He next sought to compete with the champions of the sword games, asking the padişah for ^{Son -- youngest -- defeats older son at jirit} permission. By this time the King's eyes were as big as fists and ^{-- used aid of magic hair} he looked annoyed. The padişah told the youngest son that the sword competition had no restrictions, no regulations, and no penalties. ^{Brother -- same as above}

⁹Jirit (Turkish cirit) is an ancient Turkish form of jousting in which the mounted combatants hurl spears at each other, each taking turns according to a prescribed pattern. Cirit players in recent times have used blunt-ended javelings rather than deadly spears.

Son -- youngest -- defeats older son in duel -- with aid of
magic hair

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Brother -- same as above

Magic hair -- lock of -- used by youngest son -- to defeat older son in duel

Hair -- magic -- lock of -- same as above

He said that he would surely get killed by his champion. The youngest son said he accepted the rules, that both their lives would be in jeopardy, which seemed quite fair to him. He now dueled his brother and broke his sword, then threw him on the ground. Just as he was about to plunge his sword into his heart, he turned towards the padişah and said, "What is your wish, Your Majesty?"

The padişah called him to his side and asked him who he was and where he had come from. The boy said to the padişah that he would tell him his story, and he recounted the many adventures that had befallen him.

"Once upon a time there was a padişah who had three sons. He also had a beautiful garden with an apple tree that each year bore a golden apple. But the padişah was never able to pick the golden apple because a two-headed giant would pluck it the very night that it appeared. The oldest son went out to the garden to keep watch and get the golden apple for the padişah, but he fell asleep, and the giant got the golden apple again that year. The next year his second son stood guard by the apple tree, but he too fell asleep, and the golden apple was snatched away by the giant. The third year the youngest son kept watch, and when the giant appeared he cut one of his heads off and brought the golden apple to his father. When the youngest son wanted to pursue the wounded giant, his father, the padişah, sent his two brothers along with him.

~~youngest~~ Son -- youngest -- recapitulates to padişah his
various adventures

Brother -- youngest -- same as above

"They all came to a well where the giant's tracks disappeared. Both of the older boys tried to go into the well after the giant, but the fire at the bottom of the well was too hot for them. The youngest son bore the fire and found the giant's underground castle protected by iron gates. He went in, killed the giant, and brought out the giant's three brides for himself and his brothers. He sent the women up one at a time, and the two older brothers pulled each up to the surface. When they saw the youngest son's intended wife, they became envious, and while the youngest was climbing up out of the well, instead of pulling him up, they cut the rope and let him drop back to the bottom. They took the brides and came home and left their brother down below. They betrayed their youngest brother. The girl looking out of the middle window of the palace is my intended wife, the two champions I just beat are my brothers, and you are my father."

The padişah was astounded and overjoyed to be reunited with his youngest and bravest son. He renounced his authority, and placed his youngest son on the throne. He had a huge wedding for all his sons, as planned. However, he sent the two elder brothers and their brides to far, far parts of the kingdom. And they all lived happily ever after.

padişah -- abdicates throne and places successful youngest son upon it

padişah -- sends ^{unfair} fairer older sons to live in remote parts of ^{kingdom}