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The Woodcutter and His Russian Bride

There was once a young woodcutter who used to sell his wood in town and there buy provisions with the money he made. On his way back from the town one day he saw a man selling a wooden box, and after bargaining for a while with this man, he bought his wooden box. As he had spent all the money on the box that day, he had brought his mother nothing home to eat.

"Why didn't you bring any food today?" asked his mother.

"Well, mother, I bought this box instead." The young man had not opened the box before, but now he opened it and to the amazement of both of them, they saw a beautiful girl lying inside of it. The mother became quite angry with her son and said, "You are so poor that you can hardly support the two of us. How on earth are you going to support another person?"

When the girl heard this, she got up from the box and said, "Don't worry about that, mother. My subsistence will come with me."

Now, this girl was the daughter of the Czar of Russia, and she had been taken prisoner during the Turko-Russian War and put in a box to be War -- Turko-Russian sold. The box had been stolen from the ship and sold in the market-place without being opened, and that is how the young man came into the possession of this girl. The girl was very skilled in making a certain kind of shirt. The young man sold these shirts that she made, and after a while they grew well-to-do. They were even beginning to become rich.

In the meantime, now that peace had come, the Czar of Russia sent men everywhere in search of his daughter. One of these men eventually found his way to the very town where the girl now lived, and he saw there

many people wearing the special kind of shirts that he knew the girl made. He inquired about this and discovered that she lived at the home of the young man who had once been a woodcutter. The agent bought a coffee house in town and one day when Kuçuk Ahmet, which was the young man's name, came into the coffee house, he started to ^{gambling} gamble with the owner. Now, the owner was a ^{gambler -- professional} professional gambler, too, and he soon won all of the money that Kuçuk Ahmet had. And then, when he had nothing left to bet, Kuçuk Ahmet bet his wife. And the owner of the coffee house won this, too, and then he took the girl back to her father, the Czar of Russia.

Some years later Kuçuk Ahmet's mother died, and he was now free to go anywhere he liked, and so he decided to go in search of his wife who was lost. Another war against Russia began, and he took part in this war. He was taken prisoner, but after peace came again, he was released. One day a shipload of grapes arrived from Turkey, and Kuçuk Ahmet ate so many of these grapes so hungrily that the people then knew that he was really a Turk. The Czar of Russia invited him to his palace to have a talk with him and to ask him if he could plant vineyards there in Russia where such good grapes would grow. Kuçuk ^{Ahmet} Ahmet agreed to this, and thereafter he went quite often to the court ^{-- ruza} of the Czar, and during one of these visits he discovered there the girl who had been his wife, the Czar's daughter. She had never told him who she was, but now he discovered this. He then asked the Czar if he might take the girl with him to Turkey. After some years, the Czar came to like Kuçuk Ahmet so well that he consented to letting Kuçuk Ahmet take the girl to Turkey.

He put his wife aboard the ship, and then he returned to the palace of the Czar to bid a last farewell to his father-in-law and mother-in-law.

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But while he was at the palace, the ship left the port and went off to Turkey with his wife but without him.

When she arrived in Turkey she met a gentleman who, feeling sorry for her, invited her to live for the time being in his large home together with him and his wife. Now this man was really a woman in disguise, and she had married a young girl, telling the young girl that she was really a woman. She had to pretend to be her father's son in order to keep all his estates, and she promised the young girl that she would give her a rich life if she would pretend to be her wife and live with her. And it was to this home that the Czar's daughter stayed to await the arrival of her husband.

Man -- pretends
he is woman
-- to secure
inheritance

Now there was only one ship a year that sailed from Russia to Turkey, and during the whole year that the young man had to wait to get the next ship, he worked as a shepherd. When the time came for the next boat to sail, he went to the pier. When he was asked to show his ticket by the ship's officer, he showed him the ticket he had bought the year before, explaining why it was that he was sailing only now.

When he landed in Turkey he had no money to pay for the meal that he ordered in a restaurant. But it so happened that in that restaurant was the gentleman who was a woman, the one with whom the Czar's daughter was living. She recognized the young man from the descriptions that the Czar's daughter had given her. She paid the bill and asked the waiter to take the young man to a hamam and have him washed thoroughly after his long and hard voyage. She gave the waiter money to buy a new suit of clothes for him, too.

Dark - Turkish

Kuçuk Ahmet was invited to the house where there seemed to be two women and one man living, but the man was really a woman. When Kuçuk

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Ahmet arrived at this house, he saw his wife there, and he looked at her, and he said, "I seem to remember you. You look like my former wife." And so they recognized each other and were united, and they lived happily ever after.