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The Step-Daughter Who Married the Dervish

Once there was a woman who had three daughters. Two of these daughters were her own, but the eldest was her step-daughter. All three of the girls were very good tailors. She used to buy all sorts of things for her own daughters but she bought nothing for the step-daughter, and for this reason the step-daughter was unhappy and used to cry secretly.

When the mother was sewing by the window one day a dervish was walking past the house. The woman invited the dervish to come and tell her the fortune of her daughters. "Open the luck of my daughters!"¹ said the woman. *stepsisters*

"How many daughters have you?" said the dervish.

"I have two," said the woman. But the dervish had already seen the step-daughter weeping by another window. He produced an apple and gave it to the woman, saying "Cut this apple into two halves and let each of your daughters eat one half of it. This will open their luck."

The step-daughter was listening to this conversation from upstairs. When the dervish was going away she was watching him from where she sat, and the dervish wondered why she had not come down. He wondered if she were the daughter of a neighbor. When the dervish was walking past the house the next morning, this same girl was alone in the house because her step-mother and sisters had gone out. The dervish knocked on the door and when the girl

¹To "open someone's luck" may be to tell his fortune, the kismet written on his forehead; supposedly one's kismet is irrevocable, but there is occasionally the suggestion that a religious person, such as a dervish, may improve one's fortune.

opened it for him, he said, "Are you the woman to whom I gave the apple?" This woman looked, of course, like all women, for women in those days were veiled. She told him that she was only a step-daughter, and that the apple he had given had been eaten by her two step-sisters. She also told him that she was unliked in the house and was badly treated.

The dervish produced a pear and gave it to her. "You will eat a piece of this pear each night for seven nights, and then seven days later a very important man will ask you to marry him. Your step-mother will try everything to prevent your marrying that man, and she will try to make your marriage afterwards unhappy. But don't throw away the stem of the pear. You must guard it carefully.

Fortune began to smile on the face of the step-sisters. They each married what appeared to be a fine husband. An old man came along after the fourteen days had expired and asked for the hand of the oldest daughter, the step-daughter, who was very disappointed and cried for hours. The step-mother finally decided to marry her to him. When her husband opened her bridal veil, and she looked out at his face, she was amazed to see that he was really a very handsome man. "Was it you who wanted to marry me? The man who wanted to marry me was an old man," she said.

"Do you remember the dervish that spoke to you the other day? Well, I am he," said her husband.

The men that the other two sisters married were very cruel to them. They beat them almost every day. One day the step-daughter decided to visit her step-mother. She put on her finest clothes and rode in a splendid horse-drawn carriage. She took many presents with her. Her step-mother was very surprised to have this visit.

"Why are you so well dressed?" she asked. "The man whom you married looked like a very poor man."

"Oh, no," said the step-daughter, "my husband is a very rich man. I have a very fine house and many maids and cooks as well."

"There must be a mistake in this. The man that wanted to marry you was an old man. I am sure that you married a different man than the one to whom we agreed to give you."

"Well, you remember that you took me to him. This is the man that I saw when my veil was lifted."

"No, it can't be," said the step-mother. "You must have married a different man." The step-mother was very angry with the step-daughter. She tied her hands and carried her down to the basement and locked her up there. She gave her a pitcher of water to drink and a piece of bread to eat.

The husband of the step-daughter, the dervish, waited for her for a long time, and when she didn't return he became quite worried about her. He walked over to his mother-in-law's house and asked her if she knew where his wife was. He said, "My wife was going to visit you and bring you some presents. Have you seen her today?"

"No I haven't seen your wife," said the step-mother. "She didn't come this way."

They looked all over the town for her. They had town criers go about the streets announcing her disappearance.

In the meantime, the step-mother decided to go and take a look at her step-daughter in the basement. All of the ^{pearls} tears that had fallen from the girl's eyes had turned into pearls. When the step-mother unlocked the door of the basement and entered she could not believe her eyes for the place was full of beautiful pearls. "Where did you get all of these pearls?" she

asked. She took as many pearls as she could carry, and she went to the market to sell them. She got a great amount of money for the pearls.

The dervish went to the market later and as he walked around he noticed that the pearls in all of the jewelry stores looked alike. He took up one of the pearls, which was a magic pearl, and looked at it closely, and he was able to see in it the place where his wife was. He asked the price of the pearl, paid the price that was asked, and took it with him. By looking at the pearl steadily as he walked, he was guided to the house where the girl was imprisoned. When he came to the entrance of the cellar, he heard the girl crying "Save me! Save me!" The dervish tied the hands of his mother-in-law, broke down the basement door, and took the girl away with him. Later, he took her to another country.

Now let us go back and see about the two step-sisters, and what they are doing. The middle sister became blind, and the youngest one grew stupid. The dervish asked his wife what he should do to punish the two sisters and their mother.

"Do whatever you like to my step-mother," she said, "but do not be too cruel to my sisters. They already have had punishment enough."

He then, by use of magic, transformed her mother into a deformed hunchback. She became so ugly that when her husband came home he could hardly believe his eyes.

One day the father-in-law of the dervish took one of the pearls in his hand, looked at it, and there saw the image of the dervish. He put it down saying, "Oh, these are magic pearls. Now I understand why you have become like this. These pearls have deformed you." When his wife took up several pearls and looked at them, she also saw the image of the dervish in them,

with his long beard and gown. The two of them then went to the dervish and threw themselves at his feet, asking him to forgive them. The dervish said to them, "I have forgiven you." Upon this the woman returned to her former condition. And there ends our tale