

Story #102 (Tape # , Summer 1963)

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Canpolat and the Farmer

One day a farmer hired a young man to do his farm work. He said to him, "Take this loaf of bread, but do not eat it; take this pot of yogurt, but do not eat it [break the surface of it]; take this hound and plow the place where it lies down."*

The young man took the oxen, the hound, the pot of yogurt, and one and a half loaves of bread and went to the field. He felt very hungry on the way, but could not eat anything, as his master had told him, "Do not eat the loaf; do not eat the yogurt [do not spoil the skin on top of the pot of yogurt], or else I shall take off enough hide from your back to make a drum."

The young man returned home very hungry and tired, and without doing any work at all. His master punished him by skinning the hide of his back and killed him while doing so.

Not knowing what had happened to his brother, the victim's younger brother came to the farmer and asked employment from him, but he suffered in the same way.

The youngest brother, who was called Canpolat, went out in search of

*The narrator has omitted part of the contract between the farmer and the employe. Not only must the young man obey the directions about plowing and about not eating the bread or breaking the surface skin of the yogurt, but he must also avoid any display of anger. If he fails to keep any of these conditions, he will lose a strip of hide from his back. The farmer is also bound by an agreement not to become angry. If he fails to keep this condition, the employe will cut a strip of hide from his back.

his elder brothers. By chance, he discovered that his brothers had been killed in the service of the farmer. He asked the farmer to give him employment. The farmer told him, "But I have one condition. If I am not pleased with your work, I shall take a strip of hide off your back enough to cover the top of a drum. Do you agree?"

Canpolat accepted the farmer's offer.

"All right, son. You can sleep over there and begin work tomorrow morning," said the farmer.

In the morning he gave Canpolat a hound, a pot of yogurt, two loaves of bread and a half loaf of bread, and two oxen. He sent the young man to plow his field at such and such a place. He gave the young man the following instructions: "Do not eat the half, and do not spoil the whole loaves; do not spoil the skin on the surface of the yogurt, but plow the place where the hound lies down."

In the field, the hound found a place at the bottom of a rock and lay down to sleep there. "You were responsible for the death of my brothers," said the young man to the hound, and kicked it to death. In a fit of anger he killed one of the oxen, too. He then ate the bread and the yogurt,** and came back to the farmhouse with one ox.

The farmer asked him, "What have you done, son?"

"What could I have done, master? The hound lay at the bottom of a rock, and would not get up, so I kicked it and killed it. When I was ploughing the bottom of the rock, one of the oxen died. Are you angry with me, master?" Canpolat asked.

**The narrator does not know, apparently, how the protagonist eats both bread and yogurt without disobeying the farmer. The bread is yufka or pide--both flat-loaved. He is told not to break the edge of the loaf. He simply cuts out the center and leaves the edge intact. He eats the yogurt by breaking a hole in the bottom of the jar and sucking out its contents, leaving the surface skin unbroken.

"No, I am not, son," said the farmer, because he knew that if he said "yes," Canpolat would take off the hide of his back according to the terms of the agreement.

The farmer realized that he would not be able to cope with Canpolat, and he began to think of a plan to get rid of him. He had hired him during the season when ibibiks# begin to sing. He asked his mother, "Mother, climb that tree and sing there as ibibiks do." His mother climbed the tree, and when she was about to sing like an ibibik, Canpolat threw a stone at her, and the old woman toppled down lifeless. Now the farmer was terribly angry, because he had lost his ox before, and now he had lost his mother.

One night when he and his family were sitting in the house, the farmer's young son kept saying (I beg your pardon,) "I have got to go out to pee. I have got to go out to pee." The farmer called Canpolat and told him to take his son outside and "drain him." Canpolat took the farmer's son outside and in an effort to drain him he crushed the child to death. He hit the child on a stone and broke him into nine pieces.

When he came back, the farmer asked, "Where is my son?"

"Well, did you not say, 'Crack and drain him'? That is what I have done. Are you angry with me, master?"

"No, no, I am not angry with you," said the farmer. If he had said "yes," Canpolat would have skinned the hide of his back. Therefore, the farmer was frightened and kept quiet.

That night, Canpolat listened to the conversation of the farmer and his wife through the wall of their bedroom. "Prepare some food, and we shall pack up and leave early tomorrow morning, or else this man will finish destroying us," said the farmer to his wife. When the farmer's wife was

#Ibik is the comb of a cock or other male bird. Ibibik would seem to designate some crested bird or a fowl with a comb.

preparing some food during the night, Canpolat got into the sack in which the food was put. When they were ready to go, the farmer shouldered the sack and they left. When they came near a river, some dogs came out barking. "If Canpolat were here now, he would have got rid of these dogs easily," said the farmer.

When Canpolat heard this inside the sack, he shouted, "Here I am, master!" Canpolat drove the dogs away and saved the farmer and his wife from the danger of being bitten.

They decided to spend the night by the river. The farmer and his wife planned to throw Canpolat into the river when he was asleep.

Overhearing their plan, Canpölat came and lay between the farmer and his wife when they were both fast asleep. The farmer made the terrible mistake of throwing his own wife into the river instead of Canpolat. ##

##The last two paragraphs are greatly telescoped. Usually there are three or four incidents after their arrival at the river bank