

Story #173 (Tape #2, Summer 1970) Narrator: Ayşe Okan, 9; child of Forestry employe

Location: Forestry Compound at Gerede Bolu vilayet

Date: July 1970

Parmak Çocuk (Finger Child)

Once there was and was not, when the sieve was in the straw, there was a man and a woman who had no children. One day when the wife prayed to Allah to give them a child, an angel entered the house bringing a nut in her hand. She said, "You will crack this nut, and then you will find what is inside." Saying this, she disappeared.

When the husband came home, they cracked the nut and a tiny little child came out of it. Months and years passed, and this child never grew, and the parents were worried about him. One day the mother said, "Never mind. What is important is that we have a child."

One day the father went to the marketplace, asking his wife to bring the horse after him, later on. But the child insisted he would like to take the horse to his father.

"How can you take the horse?" asked his mother. "You are too small for that."

"Never mind. I can do it," he said. The child sat on the horse's ear and went to market, singing. On the way, he was stopped by bandits. They said, "Let us steal that horse and sell it in the market."

"Don't you dare touch my horse," said the child, "or I shall punish you very severely."

When the bandits heard this, they ran away, for they thought there was a jinn in the horse. On the way, another bandit stopped the horse. The child jumped out of the horse's ear, where he sat singing.

The bandit said, "Who is singing?"

The child said, "It is I, sir."

"Come let me take you to your father," the bandit said. He took him instead to his own house and put him in a cage, saying he was taking him to his father. But he took the child in the cage to the marketplace, where he showed him to everyone and charged 25 kuruş to show him. Thus he earned much money. On the way home, an eagle saw him and snatched the cage from his hand, carrying it upward into the sky. When it started raining, the eagle just let the cage fall down. It was caught on the branch of a tree. The child heard the sound of an ax coming to his ears. He shouted, "Help, help!" It was his own father, who was cutting wood in the forest. He ran to the tree from which the cry came, but the cage was up in the top of a very tall tree. He went up and took him down, saying, "Come on. Let me take you home."

From then on, the little child obeyed his mother's advice and they lived happily thereafter.