Once there was and once there wasn’t, when God’s creatures were many, and it was a sin to talk too much, time in time—well, in those times, there were two sisters. These sisters had neither father nor mother. They lived by themselves, and they were poor. They had almost no food to eat, they were so poor.

The elder of these two sisters was called Bold Girl. One day, Bold Girl said to the younger one, “Well, this won’t do at all. At least let me get you married to someone, and then I can live on what you may have.”

So she put on her charshaf and went out. She looked here and there, but she could not find anybody fit for her sister. Finally she came to a great big house with a black door. The door was black, and the curtains were black, and everything else in sight was black. It was a very strange sort of place.

There were some children playing there, and Bold Girl asked, “Whose is this house?”

1 The Turkish term used was Arsız Kız, which means “bold Girl” or “Shameless Girl”; it can also have other meanings, but Bold Girl seemed suitable here.

2 An article of clothing which covers the head, the face, and the body, worn by Moslem women in earlier times when they went out in public.
They said, "It belongs to the padishah, of course."

"Why is it all black?" she asked.

"Oh," said a child, "they are mourning because they had a son and he is lost, so they are mourning for him."

As she walked into the house, one of the servants stopped her, saying, "Where are you going?"

Bold Girl said, "I want to see the lady of the house."

"How can you go in without asking permission? You wait here, and I'll ask the lady."

The servant asked the lady, and the lady said, "All right. Let her come in and let's see what she has to say. Don't break her heart. Let her come in."

So Bold Girl was admitted, and taken to the lady's room, a room all black—the walls were black, the bedstead was black, the door was black, the curtains were black, the covers were black—and the woman was wearing a black gown, and crying into a black handkerchief.

"Greetings be!" said the woman.

And, "Greetings to you!" the girl said.

"Who are you?"

Bold Girl said, "Well, we are two sisters and live together, and we are very, very poor, so I decided to find someone to own us. I have come out and looked around, on my right and on my left, and I haven't been able to find anyone. And what ails you, my lady? Why do you cry, and why do you mourn, all in black?"
what happens down below, take care not to fall asleep, because if you fall
the tree there. You are going to stand up in the tree and you'll watch
what you are going to do. I'm taking you to the cemetery. There's a Great

If it's works, it's going to be very, very happy for you. And in the end, there's the
tree Bold Girl, and she said to her sister, "Listen to me. I have a plan.

She came home and talked to her sister. She was a very, very clever girl.

Bold Girl left the palace.

The lady of the house gave her some money to help them a little, and

"Bold Girl said, "God is Great. Let us see what He'll show us."

I'd wish you could find my son for me"

I promise that I would take her into the palace and I would marry

would. I prom"ise that I would take her into the palace and I would marry

"Oh," said the lady of the house, "How I wish you could find my son for me."

"Well," said Bold Girl, "Suppose I find your son for you. Would you

"Well," said Bold Girl, "Suppose I find your son for you. Would you

we don't know what happened. How would you take it?"

there, we can't even know whether he died or whether he just disappeared.

There, we can't even know whether he died or whether he just disappeared.

Dr. walker, who took care of him, and one morning we woke up and he wasn't

a doctor, who took care of him and one morning we woke up and he wasn't

were all right, she said. "That's my story. I had a son, eighteen

me, please."

"No," said Bold Girl. "I have to do something about it."

Nothing can be done about it."

"Don't open my wounds," said the woman. "I'll forget all about it."
asleep, then you'll fall out of the tree and nothing will come of our plan except that you will die. So you'll be very careful not to go to sleep, and you'll be very careful to look out, to watch what happens, all night long. And in the morning you'll come down and tell me all that happened during the night."

The younger sister was no child any more; she was at a marrying age. Bold Girl took her in the evening to the cemetery and helped her up into the tree, and once again told her to be careful not to fall asleep. So the younger sister stayed up in the tree and watched carefully to see what was happening.

After midnight, while she was sitting there, she heard the footsteps of a horse coming shukka, shukka, shukka, shukka, and there was a man on the horse, with a torch in his hand. He came right to the foot of the tree in which the girl was hiding, and he got off his horse and began to dig at the grave right under the tree. And out of the grave came a young man. The man who had come on the horse had some dinner leftovers, and he poured them in front of the youth. The youth ate—as eat he must—and then the man said, "Will you be with me?"

The young man said, "No." So the man took his whip and beat and beat and beat the poor boy. Then he pushed him into the grave again and covered it.

In the morning, the girl came down from the tree and told Bold Girl everything she had seen. "Do you think this youth is their son?" asked the younger sister.

Bold Girl said, "Perhaps. I'll go and talk to the lady about it." So
He had hand al

and ma He had hand

hand try, ry hi

The em pour

pour

rd re im

oul

be en nd pu, nt

we say shukka, shukka shukka, shukka

uk

will

try take

dire eman wa

ng

ry ne was ir a mi

ni beca

rd

nal He nd

and pull pull nd pull

rt, sp, ope: On

the i re

he urs, pour: pi

pi

and pa nah

heart

to al:

ean capt

im
They took the sick boy to the hospital and they took good care of him. Every day, Bold Girl came and asked about the health of the boy, and the mother kept on saying, "I remember my promise. Don't worry."

Finally, the boy got well, and the promise was fulfilled. The younger sister and the padishah's son were married. "Now," said Bold Girl to the younger one, "I've found a fat tail for you. You can lick on it, and eat and live on it, and forget about me. Don't even ask about me."

Now Bold Girl started out to seek her own fortune, and at last she came to a beautiful house, the house of another padishah. "Oh," she said, "perhaps I can work here as a servant and earn my living." So she asked there for work. "I can work here if they want me," she said.

The servants inside said, "There are enough servants here. We don't think they would want any more. But let's ask."

"All right," said the cook, "let her in. She may help me by peeling onions and potatoes and stringing beans." So she was taken to the kitchen, and she and she cut the other vegetables, and she washed the dishes, and she scrubbed worked all day long. She peeled potatoes and onions and cut them, the bottoms of the cooking pots, and she put the shelves in order. Well, she worked hard all day long!

It seems it was the habit of the padishah's wife to come down to the kitchen once a week. One day when she got down to the kitchen, she saw everything spotlessly clean. She wasn't used to seeing the kitchen so nicely.

3This is an anachronism.

4In some parts of the world, including parts of rural Turkey, the fatty tails of a special breed of sheep are used for fat; the fat is melted and used in place of butter for cooking. It is very heavy, and it has a special odor; still, it is used by poor people. To do away with the special smell, the peasants put into it whole apples and onions. The "fat tail" suggests the richness of life that the narrator felt Bold Girl envisioned for her sister.
arranged and cleaned. "Look, look," she said, "who has done this? Who is responsible for this?"

And they said, "This new girl who is taking care of the kitchen has done it."

"Oh, she must be very good," she said. "She's not going to work in the kitchen any more. She's going to come upstairs and be in my service. She will light the stoves and sweep the floors and clean the lamps." So Bold Girl left the kitchen, and she worked in the lady's rooms. She lighted her stove and made her bed and cleaned the floors, and did every sort of work upstairs.

Now, this padishah and his wife had a son, but he was bewitched. He wouldn't eat anything; he wouldn't talk to anyone; he wouldn't do anything; he would just sit in his room and stare. He hadn't talked to a single person for years.

One day the padishah said to his wife, "Listen, wife, this girl is very active and she's very clever. She seems to be a very able person. Why don't we put our son's room in her charge, so she will work in there? Perhaps she'll be helpful."

One day she was carrying water upstairs in two buckets, and right at that moment the padishah's son happened to be coming out of his room. When she saw him coming out of his room, she pretended to slip, and she let herself fall down the stairs with her legs up and the water pouring all over her. She made a very funny sight, but all on purpose. And the boy, who hadn't laughed for years, couldn't hold himself, and began to laugh. The good news was carried to the padishah and his wife, "The prince has laughed!"
"Well," said the padishah's wife, "maybe you were right. Let's put her in his service. That may do some good for our son."

told the girl that from that day on, she would be in charge of the prince's room, to light his stove and make his bed and attend to his orders, or whatever else was to be done for him. She was to sleep in the same room, too. She liked her new work. "It's much better this way," she said.

And she started caring for that room. She cleaned it every day. She worked and worked, and when it was nighttime, she went to bed. They put a poor little mattress for her there on the floor, and she slept on it.

The prince talked to himself, saying, "Now, in addition to all else, I have to suffer this girl in here. How did this Bold Girl come into my life?"

In truth, the boy was in love with the fairy king's daughter. There was a secret way out of his room, and every night he would go to his sweetheart, after everyone else had gone to sleep. But from the day Bold Girl began to sleep in his room, he was unable to go to visit his sweetheart.

At last, he couldn't bear it any longer, and he decided to go to visit the fairy king's daughter anyway. To make sure that Bold Girl was asleep, he took a big needle and stuck it into her flesh. She just gritted her teeth and never gave a sound, pretending she was asleep.

After the prince had made sure she was asleep, he left. He lifted up one corner of the carpet and opened a trap door in the floor, and there was a stairway going down. He went 

the fairy king's daughter was going to have a child. "Where have you been all this time?" said she.
And he said, "Oh, don't ask me! I have Bold Girl with me. This is how it happened. She was working in the palace, and one day I saw her fall down the stairs with two buckets of water pouring over her, and her feet sticking up in the air. It was a funny sight, and I wish I hadn't done so, but I laughed. They thought that she pleased me, and they ordered her to sleep in my room. And ever since, she has been sleeping there."

The fairy king's daughter said, "I am about to have my baby, and I need help. Somehow, we must find a midwife to help me."

Bold Girl was listening, and when she heard this, she made herself look hunchbacked and ugly and old. She wrapped herself in heavy clothes and took a lantern in her hand, and a stick, and she went around the palace to the entrance of the fairy king's house. Just then, the padishah's son came out of the house and saw this old woman. "Where are you going, old woman?" he said to her.

And she said, "Oh, I'm in a hurry. I have to deliver a baby. I'm a midwife, and my lantern is all darkened and I can't find my way, and yet they're in a hurry. I have to get there."

"Oh, you are a midwife?" said the man. "My wife is going to have a baby, too. Please come and deliver mine first."

"How can I do it? They are waiting for me," she said.

"Oh, please do come in and take mine first. I'll give you more money. Please come!" Because she was all wrapped up in clothes, he could not recognize the old woman as Bold Girl, and took her in.

He didn't know her, but the fairy king's daughter knew her (what don't they know, these fairies!) She gave birth to a very, very odd, golden-haired baby son. And then she said, "My father and other don't know anything about"
this baby, so I can't keep him here. You take this baby and let him be yours."

right," said the old woman. "I have a young sister, and she'll take
care of this baby."

She took the baby and went upstairs, putting the baby in her loose, baggy
trousers. She stretched her legs by the doorsill and she began screaming, "Help!
Help!" she cried. "What sort of pedishah's house is this? The baby's already
born, and nobody knows anything about it! Help! Help!"

And they all ran. They dashed to the room and, true enough, there was a
beautiful baby boy born. "Oh, now rice!" they said. "Our son has a baby son.
what a happy event!" So they made a good bed for Bold Girl and they put her
in bed, with the baby next to her.

The fairy king's daughter heard all this excitement, and (what don't they
know!) she understood what was happening. She said to the prince, "That girl
has saved me from a very hard spot. From now on, you must be my brother, and
nothing more. Now, go and get married to that girl. I give what is mine to
her, and let it be *helal* to her. Go, then, and marry the girl."

So, whether he liked it or not, he came back and, in a wedding that lasted
forty days and forty nights, got married to Pold Girl. They ate and drank, and
had their wish fulfilled.

---

5 The narrator said, "Let it be *helal*, like my mother's milk," signifying that
there was to be absolutely no sin or obligation involved in the conferring
of the gift. Moslems are deeply concerned lest they die without being absolved
of all obligations; of these obligations, the most sacred is that to one's
mother, symbolized by the mother's milk.