

Story #381 (Tape #3, 1972)

Narrator: Mustafa Ceylan, 50  
Doğla village,

Location: Karacabey kaza, Province  
of Bursa

Date: Spring 1972

The Köse Miller

*Death by  
regret*

A dying man told his son never to have any grain ground by a köse miller. After his father died the son took some grain to the mill. He noticed that the miller was beardless, and he remembered his father's last words. He got on his donkey again and headed toward the next mill. The miller there was also beardless. Remembering his father's words, he got on his donkey again and went to the third mill, which was the last one in the vicinity. The miller was again beardless. He got on his donkey <sup>a</sup> again and went back to the first mill, but the köse had gotten there before him.<sup>1</sup> Since it was growing dark, and the young man was anxious to have the wheat milled, he unloaded his donkey and gave the bushel of wheat to the köse miller. After he milled the wheat, the miller said, "It is dark now, and we are both hungry. Give me some of your flour so that we can make a cake and eat it."

The young man gave the miller some flour. As the miller was kneading the dough, he told the young man to add some water to it but made him pour in more water than necessary. When the dough became too soft, the miller made the young man put some more flour to the dough--more flour

than necessary. This time the dough naturally became too hard. Thus the miller made the young man use up all his flour to make a cake. When the cake was baked, the miller said, "We'll each tell a story. Whoever tells the better story will have the cake." The young man agreed and asked the miller to tell his story.

*Story tells  
contest*

"We have a garden by the stream. We planted squash in the garden, and out of one of the squash plants a rootlet sprouted and crept over the stream. A new squash plant started growing on the other side of the stream. I crossed the stream by walking on the rootlet and picked the squash growing on the other side of the stream. Then we ate the squash." The miller ended his tale. "Now tell me your story," he said to the young man.

*Tell  
Tale*

This was the young man's story. "We used to have a beehive. One evening the lame bee did not return to the hive; therefore, I went out in search of it. I saw that a man had put a yoke on the bee's neck and was making it plow his field. I freed the bee from the man but noticed that its neck was injured from the yoke. I asked the villagers, 'What kind of medicine will make the bee's neck heal?' They recommended walnut oil. When I rubbed walnut oil on the bee's neck, a walnut tree grew out of it. It grew and grew and became a gigantic tree. Its branches were loaded with walnuts. The passers-by began throwing stones and dirt clods to get the walnuts down. Soon, enough stones and dirt had accumulated on the tree for us to plant barley there. The barley grew and matured. When I went to cut it, a pig came out of the barley. I threw my scythe at the pig, and the shaft of the scythe got buried into the back of the animal. As the pig ran, the scythe cut the barley.

*Tell  
Tale*

Story #381

Later I gathered the barley. I got myself a bushel of barley cut without even moving a finger. I brought the barley<sup>2</sup> to your mill to be ground, and you have made cake out of it."

The miller had to accept the fact that the young man's story was better than his own. The young man got the cake made from a bushel of flour and took it home to his mother.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Earlier in the tale, the grain that the young man has milled is identified as wheat.

<sup>3</sup>This is a greatly telescoped variant of this well-known tale.