

Story #450 (Tape # 10, 1970)

Narrator: Abdullah Akdemir of Çamlıdere, Province of Ankara; but tale was collected at forestry station on Koroğlu Dağ, Province of Bolu.

Location: Koroğlu Mountain, Province of Bolu.

Date: July 1970.

The <sup>A</sup>Kadı, the Devil, and Women

There once was a kadı who lived as a boarder in the home of a man and his wife. The kadı wished to be flirtatious with the woman of the house and to show his affection for her. His quarters were one floor above those of the man and his wife. He watched for an opportunity to talk with the woman, and finally he found a chance, and he told her of his affection for her.

Now, this woman was greatly attached to her husband and could keep no secrets from him, and so she told him of this conversation with the judge. She asked her husband's advice: "What should we do about this?"

"That is no problem," said the husband. He then went to the judge and said, "Kadı, efendi, tomorrow I must depart on a long journey. My wife is very strict about not going out and showing herself in public.<sup>1</sup> Will you take care of her until I return, buying her necessities at the marketplace and sending them home to her? To the extent that we become indebted to you in this way, I shall pay you upon my return."

The judge answered, "I shall be glad to do this for you." The judge had in fact, been looking forward to just such a situation. From his office he sent someone to the woman's house to ask her if she needed anything. "Tell her the kadı sent you to ask if she needed anything," he instructed.

<sup>1</sup>The narrator here used the word superstitious to indicate the woman's strict habits of modesty. The meaning, however, is perfectly clear.

the man. He also sent along with the man some things for her that he had already bought.

The woman said to the man who brought these things to her home "No, I do not really need anything. Just tell him to come and call on me in person shall be waiting for him."

In the evening, the judge, who lived one floor above the woman's apartment went straight to her quarters without informing his own household of this. As soon as he arrived where a dining table had been well set he and the woman sat down and started to eat and drink. But all the while, the judge was showing signs of impatience to make love to this woman, and he kept speaking to her affectionately "Don't be in such a hurry," she said.

"After all, there are only two of us in the house. As you know, my husband has gone away on a long trip to a distant place." Actually, however, the woman had arranged with her husband to hide in a closet

She took the judge to a guest room and said, "You undress in here." The judge undressed and lay on the bed. The woman returned, but just as she entered the room, there was a loud knocking heard on the house door "Oh, my husband's back!" She pointed to her empty Krousseau chest which was standing there and said, "Quick, get in there!" The judge climbed in and she locked the cover. By that time, her husband was in the room "What is the matter, my man? Why did you return so soon?"

"I met the tax collector on the way," he said, "and this man informed me that if I did not pay my property taxes tomorrow he would appropriate our house and sell it for the taxes we owe." He said that a decision had been reached to do that well I had no money with me and I have returned. The term hacienda is used here to indicate the appropriation or seizure of property to pay some overdue debt.

in order to find a way to settle this tax bill. After that I shall go  
this I thought I might borrow some money from the judge, but I was ashamed  
to do that.

The wife said, "Oh, forget about borrowing money from others. Just take  
that chest over there and sell it tomorrow. With the money you get for it  
pay the taxes and then go on your journey."

"Can I do that?" he asked

"Of course you can," she said. "Just take it to the auction room."

Well the poor lead had to remain in that chest, and he had to urinate  
and defecate there too for he had to remain there all night. He could not  
say anything while the man and his wife were there in the same room.

In the morning a porter was called, and the chest was loaded onto his  
back. Shortly after he had left the house the porter heard someone behind  
him somewhere call out, "Porter!"

The porter turned around and looked, but there was no one to be seen  
He swore loudly, "You God-damned fellow! What do you want from me?"

But after a while, when he stopped to rest his load against something  
for a moment, a voice said, "Porter, son I am here in the chest. They are  
here. When you leave this chest at the auction room, go at once to the  
clerk of the court and tell him that the lead has been caught in a trap.

Say he is in the chest at such-and-such an auction room. Tell him to go there  
and buy the chest at any price necessary. Porter, how much did the man pay  
you to carry this chest?"

"Five francs," said the porter

"Well, I shall pay you twenty-five francs. Go and do this job!"

The porter carried the chest to the auction room, reentered it there  
where it was to be auctioned off between two and three o'clock in the

afternoon. In the meantime, the porter went to the court and spoke to the clerk. The clerk went to the auction room and when the chest was offered for sale he began to bid on it. But the owner knowing who was inside chest started raising the bid. When the clerk would raise the price one lira, the owner would raise the bid ten liras. Finally however, the clerk succeeded in buying the chest at a very high price. Then the chest was carried to a private room and opened, and the clerk brought a clean under garment and a clean suit for the judge.

In the past the judge had heard the husband, his landlord praying as he took his ablutions<sup>3</sup>, "O Allah, save me from the temptations of the devil and of women!" The judge had always laughed at this, not understanding why the man would say such a thing. He used to think to himself, "How women, those creatures of pleasure, have any evil in them?" But after this incident, the judge came to realize that there was such a thing as female evil.

<sup>3</sup>The ablutions referred to here are, of course, the ritual washing before each namaz service, whether at the mosque or in private.