

Story #571 (1969 Tape #11)

Narrator: Mehmet Tekçe, green grocer, 50

Location: Aliçerçi village, kaza of Bozkır, Province of Konya--narrator's home; tale taped in nearby village of Akça Pınar

Date: Autumn 1969

Phallus Revived as Bird

There is a village in this area called Kuruçay. A man of village married and spent fifteen or twenty days with his wife. he went to Manisa<sup>1</sup> where he remained for fifteen years. His wife had become pregnant before he had left, and when he returned fifteen years later, their son had become a young man. After he had been home for eight or ten days, again loving his wife, the man suddenly had a terrible pain in his stomach, and in one hour's time, he died.

The woman cried and lamented a little, and she decided to cut off her husband the "tools" with which he worked. She found a razor, cut off the man's penis, and put it in a covered jar.

In the morning the (hoca)<sup>2</sup> came to wash the body. He lifted the covering and felt the man. He said, "There is supposed to be a kno here. I cannot feel it. Where is the attendant?"<sup>3</sup> When the attendant came, the hoca said, "This man has no tool. Where has it gone?"

"I do not know, hoca. I must have fallen asleep and let a (cat, or rats) eat it off."

<sup>1</sup> Manisa is a province in extreme western Anatolia.

<sup>2</sup> The hoca is a Moslem priest. Among his duties is the overseeing of a ritual washing of each Moslem corpse in his district.

<sup>3</sup> As in many countries, Turks often have someone watch their dead overnight.

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The hoca cursed him, saying, "May your house be ruined! If the cat had eaten it off, it would have left a ragged scar, not a smooth one like this." Anyway, they buried the man.

At night the woman used to take the penis from the jar. She would rub this over her body and lament, "Why do you not go in and out and be as lively as you used to be? Are you not in good health?" Saying this, she would return it to the jar.

She did this for several days, and one day her son observed this. He wondered what it was with which she rubbed her body. He found the jar later and opened it. Inside there was a shrunken piece of skin. Taking a pair of tongs, he flung it on the floor. There a cat saw it and ate it, "Kırtır, kırtır."<sup>4</sup>

The next time the boy saw his mother walking toward this room, he happened to have a bird in his hand. Before she arrived, he put the bird in the jar and covered it.

The woman again thought of the penis in the jar. When she took the top off the jar, the bird flew out, "Pr-r-r-r-t!"<sup>5</sup> and flew around the ceiling. The woman then started singing the following dirge:

you who had dried up formerly now become moist?

Yu--yu--yu [no meaning].

May Allah bless you!

Yu--yu--yu.

Have you become a bird with wings?

Yu--yu--yu.

[motioning bird back] back to your nest, back to your nest!"

<sup>4</sup> Onomatopoeia for chewing.

<sup>5</sup> Onomatopoeia for fluttering of bird wings.