

Story #645 (1974, Tape #50)

Narrator: Bayram Şahin

Location: Limonlu village, kaza of
Mersin, Province of İçel

Date: January 8, 1974

#645¹ Keloğlan and the Deceived Kadı²

Once a Keloğlan told his mother to go tell the kadı's wife that he desired her. His mother protested, saying that it was impossible to go tell something like that to anyone's wife, especially the kadı's. Nevertheless, Keloğlan insisted she should go, and finally she did. She sheepishly went and found the kadı's wife, sat by the lady, and told her what her son -- dim-witted son had asked her to say to the lady. The lady took this very calmly and told the mother that she would handle the matter. She told her to tell her son to come to their bakery³ at one o'clock that night.

That night at about the given time the kadı's wife told her husband that she had forgotten a bread -- loaf of loaf of bread in the oven. She asked him to go down and get it for her.

Keloğlan, who was waiting by the bakery, saw the kadı approaching. He quickly started pacing in front of the bakery and then poked inside with his hands. The kadı saw him there and asked him

¹ A keloğlan is literally a bald boy, but in Turkish folklore he is a trickster type character and often the protagonist of tales.

² A kadı was a judge in the system of canon law in pre-Republican Turkey.

³ Larger homes may have a bakery shed built in the back yard instead of having ovens built into the house chimneys.

Story #645

what he was doing. Keloğlan promptly replied, "I was going to have an oven built just like the one you have in your bakery. I was told that yours is a middle-sized one, and I thought I would get its measurement."

The kadı said, "Yes, mine is a middle-sized one." And he left.

He went back into the house and told his wife that he had found the dim-witted boy downstairs who was taking measurements of the oven in the bakery because he was planning to build one himself.

Keloğlan went home and told his mother what had happened and added, "Is this how you were supposed to arrange things for me?"

The mother went back to the kadı's wife to inquire what had happened. The kadı's wife told her to ask her son to come to the ~~stable~~ ^{loft} of their stable, which was situated beneath their house.

That night the kadı's wife kept an ear tuned to the street. When she heard footsteps moving towards their barn, she said to her husband, "Kadı, I hear a strange animal going into the barn. Would you go and investigate, please?"

The kadı went downstairs into the barn. Keloğlan saw the kadı coming and quickly removed his cummerbund⁴ and started gathering hay. The kadı came in and, bewildered, asked Keloğlan what he was doing there. Keloğlan said, "Efendi, we had an unexpected guest come in tonight. I was getting some straw to make an extra bed."

⁴ Many people in Turkey wear a tightly wrapped waist-band or cummerbund for what are supposedly health reasons. It is not for social occasions but for work periods.

The kadı told him to get the straw and leave, and then he went back to the house.

When his wife asked him what he had found down below, he told here that the dim-witted boy was getting some straw to make a bed for an unexpected guest.

[Ahmet Uysal: "Does he take the hay for the visitor's animal?"]

Narrator: "No, it is all a lie. He is trying to sleep with the woman."

Uysal: "Yes, yes, I see."]

Keloğlan's mother went once again to see the lady, and the kadı's wife said, "Tell your son to come over tonight. When I go to bed with the kadı, I shall leave my tail stuck out, and he can do his business." The mother said that would be fine and went away.

That night the kadı's wife cooked a pumpkin for their dinner. They ate it and went to bed. The wife asked her husband if she might wear his fez⁵ to bed that night. The kadı found his wife's request whimsical but not malicious, and therefore he chose to humor her. Then she said to him, "Kadı, you had quite a bit of pumpkin tonight. You know it gives you gas. Why don't you let your tail stick out of the bed?" The kadı did as he was requested.

Later, Keloğlan slowly crept into the room. He found the bare

⁵The fez was a circular, flat-topped hat, usually red, which was outlawed after the founding of the Republic. It was the head-gear of the period when kadıs were judges.

rear end as he had been promised and penetrated it. The kadı woke up with a start, grabbed the boy, and asked for a torch to see what he had. His wife told him that she would hold the creature and sent him after a torch. She pulled the Keloğlan over her and lay down. The kadı got a torch from below and came up, but Keloğlan screamed, "Who is this coming to my house late at night?"

The kadı went down again perplexed. He went out to the bakery, and said, "This bakery is mine," Then he went to the stables and looked around and said, "This stable is mine." He went upstairs again, but once again Keloğlan made a terrible commotion and frightened the kadı away. Towards morning the kadı's wife let the Keloğlan go. She went and found a cow and cut out its tongue. Then she went down to find the kadı. He was at his own place. She showed him the tongue, and he cried out, "So, that's what happened last night! The cow stuck its tongue up my ass and burned my liver!"