

Story 738 (1976 Tape 11)

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Söğüt kaza,
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The Stepdaughter and the Demons

there was and once there was not a woman who had a ^{step} daughter and a stepdaughter. She did not like her ^{step} stepdaughter and did not take very good care of her. One day said to her husband, "Take this girl and leave her somewhere. I do not want to see her here any longer."

The husband wondered about where he could take the girl. He finally decided to take her to an old mill ^{all} on the side of a mountain. It was a mill that was no longer in use, and much of it lay in ruin. That was where he took her and left her.

That night the girl was cold and afraid. She came upon an old wheat bin in the center of the mill, and she climbed into that bin. After a while she fell asleep there.

Later that night a bear ^{güçlü All} entered the mill, walking küs, küs, küs.¹ After that, a fox ^{güçlü All} entered küs, küs, küs. And, last of all, a wolf ^{güçlü All} arrived küs, küs, küs. They took

¹This is onomatopoeia for the soft, sliding sound of the padded feet of animals.

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possession of the mill, but they had not seen the girl.

Now that they were all together, they sat down and began to talk. (These three animals were actually demons who had changed themselves into animal likenesses.) The bear spoke up and said, "I have eight large küps² of gold in such-and-such a place, and no one knows about them."

the wolf said, "I have a ram tied in such-and-such a garden. The brain of that ram is a medicine which would cure the baldness of the padişah's daughter, but nobody knows about this

And then the fox spoke: "Those things are not very great. I have more treasure than either of you, and it is kept in such-and-such a place."

They were all boasting about their riches and power. As they were talking along in this way, the fox suddenly said, "Wait! There just might be a human being here in this mill somewhere who could overhear our conversation. Let us search this mill thoroughly to be sure that there is no one here." Then they looked all over the mill to see if any human being might be there, but they had not yet looked in the wheat bin.

The wolf was aware of this and said, "Everything has

²A küp is a large--3 to 6 feet tall--earthenware vase used in the Middle East for storing water, olive oil, or other liquids.

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been examined except the wheat bin. Let us take a look into that." Of course, when they looked inside the wheat bin, they found the girl there. Taking her from the bin, they set her on the floor among themselves. Then they started nudging her and saying, "Tell us a story! Tell us a story!"

Having no choice in the matter, the girl began telling a story: "Once there was and once there was not a when they planted, they planted, they planted cotton. Yes, they planted, they planted, they planted cotton." (This was how she was telling them a story.

"It grew, it grew, it grew up; the cotton grew up. It grew, it grew, it grew. Yes, the cotton grew up. they hoed it, they hoed it, they hoed it; they hoed the cotton. They hoed it, they hoed it, they hoed it. Yes, then they hoed the cotton." (Her purpose in telling the story this way was to deter them from doing anything until the sun rose.³

"Next, they picked, they picked, they picked, they picked the cotton. They picked, they picked, they picked. Yes, they picked the cotton." (She was trying to make the story last as long as possible.)

³Ghosts and some other supernatural beings function on earth only at night. Once dawn arrives, they must return to the grave or wherever else they came from. The step-daughter is clearly aware of this and is stalling for time until sunrise.

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"Then they had it cleaned, they had it cleaned, had it cleaned, they had the cotton cleaned. They had it cleaned, they had it cleaned, they had it cleaned. Yes, then they had the cotton cleaned. Finally, they spun it, they spun it, they spun it, they spun the cotton. They spun it, they spun it, they spun it. Yes, finally, they spun the cotton." (The girl was telling them a story in this way about cotton. Much of it was just a repetition of the word cotton.)

By the time she had told them about spinning the cotton, the sun rose, and the animals (who were really demons) had to leave. They disappeared into the morning light.

The girl also left the mill when it was light and began to retrace her steps homeward. When she arrived there, she began to tell her father about all the things she had heard during the night, and the two of them began at once to locate and take the treasures of the demons. When the stepmother learned that so much wealth was to be her stepdaughter's, she grew very jealous of this and wanted her own daughter to have as much. She kept insisting and insisting that her husband take her own daughter to same mill, where she too might acquire such riches.

The stepdaughter found all of the gold, the ram whose brain was medicinal, and all of the other treasures she had

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learned about at the deserted mill. She became very rich. She had a palace built for herself, and she lived a very comfortable life.

When the husband could no longer stand his wife's nagging about it, he took the other girl to the same mill. When it became night, that girl also lay down inside the wheat bin. Later that night the demons in the forms of a bear, a wolf, and a fox arrived at the mill, but this time they were in a bad mood.

When they began talking to each other, the fox complained, "I could not get at my treasure after our last meeting here because someone had built a palace right over the place where I had buried it."

The wolf said, "I could not find my ram anywhere today. Someone apparently found it and took it away."

The bear said, "All of my gold is gone, too."

After talking this over for a short while, they all came to the same conclusion: "Someone overheard our comments about our different properties, found those treasures, and took them away." One of them added, "Many of our possessions may have been brought right here to this mill. Let us search this place for them."

The three demons searched and searched and searched, but all that they found was the girl in the wheat bin. Lifting

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her out of the bin, they set her down among them. Nudging her, they said, "Tell us a story," but the girl was much too frightened to say a single word. They poked her and said again, "Tell us a story!" Then they cuffed her with their paws, but she remained silent. Finally, they were kicking her as hard as they could. In the end, she was so mauled and beaten that she died.