

Story 786 (1970 Tape 15)

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Location: Ece from Erzurum, but tale taped at Bursa

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The (Fisherman) Betrothed to the Princess

Once a very long time ago a poor young fisherman and the daughter of the padişah fell in love with each other. (By the will of God<sup>1</sup> they were to be married. One day, however, while they were making love, the young man punched the girl. She said to him, "Did you think me a fish?"

In the morning the young man gathered his few belongings and left. This young man who was to be the son-in-law of the padişah just disappeared. He left Turkey and went to Egypt, where he became a musician. He pretended that he was a mute. Before long he became such a good musician that he was hired to be the palace musician by the Padişah of Egypt.

The daughter of the Padişah of Turkey grew thinner and thinner. To divert his daughter from her lovesickness, the

<sup>1</sup>When a matchmaker approaches the family of a girl to ask for her hand for a young man, he/she always opens the conversation with the girl's parents with this statement: "I have come by the will of God and the consent of the Prophet to ask for the hand of X for Y, the son of A and B of such-and-such a place." Here there is no matchmaker or bargaining for the young lady's hand, but the narrator suggests all of this by describing the approaching wedding as something that would be done "by the will of God."

*Tomulari  
E. H. Ece*

*Thought*

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padişah took her with him on one of his trips to visit several lands. As soon as he entered the palace of the Padişah of Egypt, the Padişah of Turkey saw and recognized the young fisherman, but the young man pretended not to recognize him.

At a formal dinner for the Turkish guests, the young man provided the music. The Turkish ruler asked his host, "Who is that musician? Where does he come from?"

The Egyptian padişah answered, "I don't really know. He has been here in my service for about ten years. He eats, drinks, works, goes to bed at night, and seems to be quite normal in every way but one: he is mute."

At that point the daughter of the Turkish padişah spoke up and said, "He is Turkish and he is not mute."

"He has been mute as long as he has worked here in the palace," said the Padişah of Egypt.

"I can make him talk."

"No, neither you nor anyone else could do that."

"Oh, yes, I can. If I cannot do so this night, I shall give you my maids, but if I do make him talk, then you will give him to me."

"Very well," said the Padişah of Egypt.

The princess tried very hard to make the musician talk that night, but he did not utter a word. As a result she had to give her maids to the Egyptian ruler. Then, "I shall bet my

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ships that I can make him talk tomorrow night," she said.

"Very well," said the Padişah of Egypt.

On the second night the princess tried again to make the young musician speak to her, but again he said absolutely nothing. She then wrote out an order turning over her ships to the Padişah of Egypt. But she said, "I know very well that I can make him talk tomorrow night. I know it so well that I agree to be hanged immediately if I should fail."

"Very well," said the Padişah of Egypt.

The following night the princess tried her hardest, using every trick that she knew to make the young musician talk. But try as she would, she was unable to make him utter any noise whatsoever. A rope was then placed around the girl's neck, and the executioners of the Egyptian padişah were ready to hang her

The young musician had been watching all of this, and when they were going to pull the rope, he said, "What you are about to hang is not a fish but the daughter of a padişah!"