

Story 949 (1977 Tapes 28  
and 29)

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Location: Polat village,  
Arpaçay kaza,  
Kars Province

Date: March 1977

The Persecuted Wife

There was once an old woman with three daughters,  
of whom lived together in a large mansion. At that time the  
padişah of the land was unmarried, but it was widely known  
that he was seeking a suitable girl to marry.

One day as the old woman's three daughters were talking  
among themselves, the oldest daughter said, "If the padişah  
were to marry me, I would make him such a large rug that his  
entire army could sit on it and still leave plenty of room  
for others.

The middle daughter then said, "Ah, if the padişah  
should marry me, I would cook him a meal so large that  
of his soldiers could eat and eat and still leave enough food  
for many other diners."

The youngest daughter said, "If the padişah were to  
choose me as his wife, I would bear him beautiful twin  
children with golden hair and pearly teeth.

The padişah was informed about the conversation of these  
three sisters, and he was very impressed with what they had

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But Şah İsmail refused to change his mind. He said to his father, "No, I intend to go there!"

The black giant said then, "If you insist on going there, then at least listen to these directions very carefully. You must take with you nine large jars of wine. There is a small stream that flows past the front of Güllüzar Hanım's palace, and there is a seven-spouted fountain that pours its waters into that stream. You must smash all those spouts so that their waters no longer flow into the stream. Then build a large fire nearby and pour the wine into the stream. Güllüzar Hanım comes to the stream each morning to drink water. When she comes out the morning that you are there and drinks the wine from the stream, you will be able to get the saçlı fırak from her."

Şah İsmail followed exactly all of the instructions given to him by his giant father, and Güllüzar Hanım gave him the saçlı fırak. Taking this quickly, Şah İsmail returned home and gave it to his sister. When his giant father learned that Şah İsmail had returned alive from Güllüzar's territory, he slaughtered a sheep as an offering of thanks for his son's safety.

But the padişah continued to beat his evil wives, and he continued to ask them about his children. Desperate now, these two evil sisters went again to the witch woman's house

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and said, "Grandmother, Şah İsmail is still alive, and the padişah somehow knows this. He keeps beating us and asking about his children. We must kill the children very soon, for otherwise the padişah will beat us to death

The witch went to Şah İsmail's house, and again she deceived Mihriban. She said to the girl, "Oh, my beautiful Mihriban, your brother should bring you Güllüzar's laughing rose.<sup>7</sup> You deserve to have it more than Güllüzar does!"

Again when Şah İsmail returned home from hunting, he saw that his sister, Mihriban, was crying. Again he asked her, "What is the matter? Why are you crying?"

Mihriban answered, "There is a wonderful laughing rose owned by Güllüzar Hanım, and I should like very much to have that for myself.

Şah İsmail promised Mihriban that he would get Güllüzar's laughing rose for her. On his way to Güllüzar Hanım's palace, he again stopped at the home of his giant father and mother. When he told his giant father that he intended to get Güllüzar Hanım's laughing rose for Mihriban, his father tried hard to persuade him not to take the risk of entering Güllüzar's country again. But Şah İsmail refused to change his mind about this. His giant father then said, "Very well,

<sup>7</sup> The expression used here is güllü kahkaha. Is this laughing rose, or is it laughter mechanism with roses?

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İsmail, but at least listen to my instructions very  
carefully. There are two doors into Güllüzar's palace. One  
of them has stood open for seven years, and the other one  
has been closed for seven years. You must open the closed

and close the open door. There are two animals guarding  
her palace, a horse and a dog. The horse will have a dish  
of meat before him, and the dog will have a stack of hay in  
front of him. You must take the meat from before the horse  
give it to the dog, and then you must take the stack of  
hay from before the dog and give it to the horse.

Şah İsmail went to Güllüzar's palace and he did every-  
thing that his giant father had instructed him to do. He

the laughing rose while Güllüzar was sleeping, and as he  
was about to depart, he kissed her two cheeks and then her  
forehead. When Güllüzar awoke and saw that her laughing  
rose had been taken by Şah İsmail, she called to the horse  
and the dog to catch Şah İsmail, but neither of those animals  
moved.<sup>8</sup> Then she called to the two doors to stop Şah İsmail,

the doors also refused to do anything to stop him. Thus  
Şah İsmail was able to escape very easily with the laughing  
rose.

<sup>8</sup> In most tales that include these two guardian animals  
and these two doors, all four of them explain what the hero  
has done for them as they shout their refusal to take action  
for their owner.

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When Şah İsmail's giant father saw his son returning alive, he was so pleased that he made a sacrifice for the occasion. As an offering of thanks, he slaughtered an ox.

Time passed, and the padişah was still beating the two evil sisters in order to try to learn more from them about his children. Once more these two older sisters went to the witch woman and told her that she must find a solution to their problem. After listening to their demand, the ~~witch~~ again went to Mihriban's house and said to the girl, "Oh, my daughter, the beauty of all the world, I know that you must feel very lonely much of the time, and I think that your brother must feel lonely too. You need a friend, and your brother needs a wife. Only Güllüzar would be suitable to be both friend to you and wife to your brother. Tell him to bring Güllüzar here and to marry her.

Once again when Şah İsmail returned home from ~~hunting~~, he found his sister very sad and crying. "Now why are you crying?" he asked her.

Mihriban said, "My dear Brother, both of us are very lonely here. You ought to get married. Go and get Güllüzar as a wife for yourself and as a companion for me."

Just as he had done previously, Şah İsmail stopped at the home of his ~~giant~~ father and mother and told them about his sister's wish. His giant father tried to explain what a

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very difficult task it would be to bring Güllüzar back from her palace. But Şah İsmail remained determined to do just that. Unable to change the boy's mind, the giant father said, "If you refuse to take my advice against trying to bring Güllüzar home, then you can at least listen to the instructions I shall now give you about how to proceed. Do not take the shortcut to Güllüzar's palace, but instead, go by way of the road that runs past this house of ours. It will take you seven months to get there by way of this road, but when you come to the end of this road, you can reach Güllüzar's palace without danger. You must bring Güllüzar here first, for otherwise she might eventually turn all of us to stone. When you reach her palace, pick three apples from the tree that grows before it. They will make you strong.

İsmail followed all of his giant father's instructions exactly. Picking three apples from the tree before the palace, he ate one of them at once. Then he went to Güllüzar's room and said to her, "Give me your hand, and I shall give you the laughing rose." When Güllüzar stretched her hand to him, he grabbed her by the wrist and pulled her up onto his horse with him, and then he galloped away as fast as possible

Şah İsmail's giant father and mother were anxiously awaiting his arrival, each staring down the road with four

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eyes. When they saw that their son was still alive, and that he was coming with Güllüzar, they sacrificed several animals as an offering of thanks for his safety. When Şah İsmail gave the two remaining apples to his parents, they ate them at once and grew remarkably young again. They looked like a five-year-old boy and girl. His father then said to Şah İsmail, "Son, I shall give my seven gold mines to Güllüzar as a wedding present

"Oh, no, Father! Two of those gold mines should be yours, and two should be my mother's. One should be given to Güllüzar, one to Mihriban, and one to me." His father accepted this proposal, and he also gave Şah İsmail his (magic) ring.

When Şah İsmail licked this (ring, <sup>but</sup>) two huge jinns appeared and asked, "What should we do? Should we burn or should we destroy?"

İsmail answered, "You should neither burn nor destroy. I want you to build just opposite the padişah's palace an even finer palace, one with eaves of gold, a throne of silver, and stones made from emeralds."

huge jinns set to work and built such a palace across from the palace of the padişah, Şah İsmail's real father. When the padişah awoke the following morning, he looked from his window and was amazed to see the new palace

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standing there. He was curious about the owner of that palace, but when he saw Şah İsmail before him, he was embarrassed

Şah İsmail's wife, Güllüzar, said to him, "Go and bring here your giant father and mother, my father and mother, your real father and mother, and your real father's two evil wives." After Şah İsmail had done as she had directed, she placed some red lentils on a golden tray that lay upon a golden table.

*Siyahale*  
*Şah İsmail*  
When the padişah, Şah İsmail's real father, observed this, he said, "My daughter, lentils do not belong with this golden tray and this golden table. Do you think that it is natural to have such things together?"

Güllüzar answered quickly, "Well, do you think it natural that my mother-in-law should give birth to a pair of puppies?"

The padişah acknowledged what a grave error he had made, and he wished now to remarry his former wife. But when Güllüzar heard him express this wish, she said, "Şah İsmail, if you permit your mother to remarry your father, I shall leave you at once!"



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Şah İsmail did not permit his mother to be married again to her former husband. In time, Şah İsmail became a better padişah than his father had been <sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> After telling a reasonably coherent tale, the narrator fails to bring his performance to a conclusion. The twins' mother has been lost since the beginning of the tale, and the audience does not hear of her again until she is invited to the final recognition scene. By the time of the final recognition scene, there are no characters left to be identified! Their identities have all already been announced. Another failure of the final scene is the lack of punishment or even verbal criticism of the despicable behavior of the two older sisters. Normally in this tale type, they are severely punished.