

Story 950 (1977 Tape 29)

Narrator: İsmail Akbaba

Location: Baraklı village,  
Arpaçay kaza,  
Kars Province

Date: Spring 1977

Seven Brothers and a Sister

Both = All

Once a very long while ago there were seven brothers. They had a mother, but they had no sister. All of the brothers wanted very badly to have a sister, but they had none.

One day their mother became pregnant again. The seven sons went to her and said, "Dear Mother, we do not have a sister. If you have a baby boy once again, we shall leave this country. We should not be able to remain here any longer. But if we should have a sister, then we shall stay. These sons went hunting every day. One day when it was about time for the new baby to be born, the boys came to their mother again and said, "Mother, if we are given a sister, hang a sieve up on the door, but if we are given a brother, then hang a churn up on the door."

124-9

While they were out hunting, their mother gave birth to a baby girl, and the woman hung a sieve on the door. But it so happened that she had a neighbor woman who was very jealous of her, and that jealous neighbor took down the sieve and replaced it with a churn.



## Story

Puzzled and sad, the girl returned home and said, "Mother, why is it that you never told me that I have seven brothers?"

Her mother answered, "Yes, my dear Daughter, you do have seven brothers."

After they had talked about the seven brothers for a while, the girl said, "Mother, I want to see my brothers, and so I intend to go and find them, wherever they may be." Having made up her mind to this, she would not listen to those who tried to stop her from going, and so she left. She walked and she walked, asking everyone she met if they had seen her brothers. After some time she reached the home of her brothers in the heavily forested area. Walking up to the house, she looked through one of the windows. When she saw nobody inside, she entered the house, swept the floors, and cooked a meal for her brothers. When it came time for her brothers to return, she hid herself behind some furniture.

Her brothers returned home from hunting and were surprised to find the house so clean. Then they discovered the meal prepared for them and were even more surprised. They could not understand who it was who had done so many things for them.

The days passed along--one day, two days, three days. Every evening when the brothers returned from hunting, they

## Story 950

found the house very clean and a meal prepared for their dinner. One day they began talking about this situation. They said, "Things cannot continue this way any longer. We must discover who is behind all these things that are being done for us. One of us should stay here in the house and hide when the rest of us go hunting, and that person should find out what is going on in our home during our absence."

The following day one of the brothers hid himself in the house when the others left to hunt. When the girl decided that her brothers had left, she came out from her hiding place and began cleaning the house. As soon as she did this, the hidden brother also came forth and grabbed her by the arm. He asked her, "Are you a man or a jinn?"<sup>1</sup>

The girl answered, "I am neither man nor jinn but a human girl. I am your sister. I have been looking for you for a long while, and at last I have found you

When the other boys returned, they asked the brother who had remained at home, "Who is that girl?"

He said, "She is our sister," and he told them what she had told him about herself.

They all greeted the girl. "We are very happy to have a sister! Dear Sister, you can live here with us, cook our

<sup>1</sup> The formulaic question here is "In misin, cin misin?"

*Found her  
of her*

## Story

meals, and tend to the housework so that we can go hunting without worrying about such things. But there is a place near here that we must warn you about. It is the lower part of this forest. Don't ever go down there, for it is a very dangerous place!"

The next day the brothers, as usual, left the house and went hunting. While their sister was cooking a meal for them, a sudden hard wind arose and put out the fire. Helpless, the girl went outside to look for a source of fire. After a while she saw smoke arising from somewhere in the lower part of the forest. In spite of the warning that her brothers had given her, she began to walk in that direction. When she reached the fire, she saw a giant <sup>128-B-2</sup> lying on the ground and the giant's daughter walking around. The girl said to the giant's daughter, "Can you give me some fire? I must cook my brothers' meal before they return home

The giant's daughter gave her some fire so that she could cook a meal, and the girl started home. But the girl was carrying a spindle in one hand, and as she started home with the fire, a ball of yarn fell from the spindle and rolled close to the place where the giant was lying. When the giant saw this ball of yarn, he followed the yarn to where it led, and it led right to the home of the girl and her seven brothers. He found that house very easily.

## Story

Through a window the girl saw the giant approaching. When the giant knocked on the door and said, "Open the door and let me in," the girl refused to do that.

Then the giant said, "If you will open the door, I shall give you a beautiful ring."

"No," said the girl, "I cannot open the door. Furthermore, you are probably lying to me."

The giant said, "No, I am not lying to you. I shall give you not only a ring but also a very beautiful bracelet. Stick out only one of your fingers through the knothole in the door, and I shall place the ring upon it."

the simple girl stuck her finger through the hole in the door, the giant began to chew upon it with his huge teeth. This gave the girl so much pain that she soon fainted and fell to the floor

When the seven brothers returned from hunting, they found their sister lying on the floor in great pain with a crushed finger. They asked her what had happened to her; the girl told her brothers her whole story from beginning to end. After they had heard this, the brothers said, "We shall kill that giant."

The brothers went to the lower part of the forest, and there they dug a very large pit--one large enough to contain the body of the giant. They then caught that giant, placed

## Story

him in the pit, and covered the mouth of the pit with many large boulders. After they had finished their work, they returned home again. There they said to their sister, "We have imprisoned that giant in a large pit in the ground, and we have covered that pit with large boulders. Don't you ever pour any water into that pit, for it is a magic pit."

"All right," said the girl.

But after a while the girl forgot all about her brothers' warning, and she poured some water into the pit. Almost immediately a rose grew up out of that pit, and when it had grown quite tall, it became a girl. The seven brothers took this girl into their home, and the oldest of the brothers married her. But because the girl had sprung from a giant she was also a giant, and that meant that she was evil. One day she gave her husband's sister some food made of frogs and snakes, and after the girl had eaten this food, her belly began to swell. Day after day the belly grew larger and larger until finally the giant wife said to her husband, "I believe that your sister must be pregnant."

When all seven brothers heard this news, they grew angry at their sister and threw her out of the house. They said "If our sister could do something as improper as that, then she will not be our sister any longer!"

*Is this?*

*the story was*

*from the text*

## Story 950

poor helpless girl left their house with nowhere else to go. She began walking, and after she had walked a good distance, she met a <sup>131-2</sup>shepherd. The shepherd asked her, "Why are you walking alone in the mountains in this way?"

told her story to the shepherd. She said, "I am the sister of seven brothers. These brothers threw me out of their house when the wife of my oldest brother accused me of being pregnant. My brothers refuse to believe me when I tell them about the reason for my belly's swelling. It has swollen so because my sister-in-law gave me frogs and snakes to eat.

The shepherd believed what the girl had told him. He at once picked some special herbs and gave them to her. Soon after she had eaten these herbs she was relieved of all the frogs and snakes inside her, and her belly shrank to its former size. The girl and the shepherd were then married

passed, and they lived happily together. Time passed, and they had two sons. When these sons had grown into quite large boys, their mother gave them a task to perform. She said, "Go out to the main road and sit beside it. To everyone who passes along you will say, 'We know that we have seven uncles, but our seven uncles do not know that they have two nephews.'"

^  
Joseph



## Story 950

boys did exactly as their mother had directed. One day one of the seven brothers just happened to pass along that road and he heard what the boys were saying: "We know that we have seven uncles, but our seven uncles do not know that they have two nephews

When he heard that statement, this brother said to the two boys, "Sons, take me to your home." At the boys' home he recognized their mother as his sister. Then the shepherd told everything to his wife's brother, including the truth about his wife's false pregnancy at the home of her seven brothers.

When this brother heard the story from the shepherd, he returned home and reported it to the six other brothers. It was only then that they realized that the oldest brother's wife had made a false accusation against their sister. They threw the giant girl out of the house. They then took their sister and her family with them and returned to their mother's home. There they all lived together very happily.