

Story 955 1977 Tape 5)

Narrator: Ali Çiftçi, 60

Location: Çıkırıkçı village,
Sarıkaya kaza,
Yozgat Province

Date: January 4, 1977

Magic Access to Treasure

In the old days there was a (hoca)¹ who had been studying the signs of (remil)² in order to discover buried treasure.

One day while he was consulting remil, it revealed to him a cave located in such-and-such a place. It also revealed to him a package of magic candles and matches on a shelf in

that cave. He also learned by casting remil and studying

the results that if one were to light one of the magic

candles with one of the magic matches, forty beautiful girls^{they went}

would appear, each with four kilos of silver coins hanging

from her skirt. These forty beautiful girls would sing and

dance until daybreak, at which time they would leave.

The hoca learned also that the only person who could help him to get the magic candles and matches was one

¹ A hoca is a Moslem priest.

² Remil (remel) is a form of numerology used for purposes of divination and fact-finding. Cubical objects or near-cubical objects (such as dice or sheep knucklebones) have letters and/or numbers and/or signs marked upon all their facets. When these objects are cast upon the ground, the markings on their upturned facets are supposed to be meaningful, to provide some message. It may require several castings to produce the whole revelation or statement.

Story 955

Ali Osman. This Ali Osman was a seven- or eight- or ten-year-old boy. The hoca went to Ali Osman's home and asked the boy's parents, "Will you let me borrow Ali Osman this evening? I have some work I'd like to have him do." The parents granted this wish of the hoca.

hoca and Ali Osman went to the cave together. There the hoca said to the boy, "Son, now listen carefully to me. After I have started to say my special prayer, the cave door will begin to open very slowly. When it has opened completely, enter the cave. You will find it full of gold coins, silver coins, and other money. Do not touch any of this. Do not bring any of those coins to me. You will bring out only a package of candles and the matches you will find with them.

The hoca then started to say his prayer, and the cave door started to open slowly. Ali Osman entered the cave but returned with an armful of gold coins. The hoca said "Alas, Ali Osman! Go quickly into the cave again and put those coins back where you found them! I don't want them!"

Osman returned the gold coins, but this time he came out with an armful of silver coins. Again the hoca shouted for Ali to return the coins. "Not those, Ali Osman not those! Get me the candles and matches!" But brainless Ali Osman then picked up some other valuables, and again the

Story 955

hoca shouted, "Put them back! Put them back I want only the candles and the matches!"

As a result of all this discussion and shouting, the magic spell was broken, and the door of the cave swung shut. Ali Osman was left inside the cave. Fortunately, he had some chick-peas in his pocket, and he was able to survive on them the next day. On the second day a giant entered the cave, saying, "Who has disordered the materials in my cave?" When Ali Osman had heard the giant approaching, he had hidden himself among the things in the cave. After the giant entered the cave, Ali Osman grabbed the candles and matches which the hoca had wanted, and then he slipped out stealthily while the door was still open

The first village that he came to was not his own village, and he had nowhere to spend the night. After he had asked a number of people there if they needed an apprentice, he was finally accepted as a guest in the household of an ağa.³ "You may stay here for the night," the ağa said. "You may sleep in the room at the top of the house."

³ The word ağa is most often applied to a rural landowner, many of whom are wealthy and powerful. The term is also appended to the name of any man of substance when one wishes to show respect for that man. Thus the term may be a kind of title, or it may, by extension, be an honorific or an expression of flattery.

Story 955

When Ali Osman went up to that room, he found that it was very dark there. Remembering the candles he had brought from the cave, he lighted one of them with one of the matches. Immediately forty beautiful girls appeared, each with four kilos of silver coins hanging from her dress. They danced and sang all night, dropping many of their silver coins for Ali Osman as they did so. Before they departed in the morning, the boy said to one of them, "Take these silver coins to my home. It is at such-and-such an address in the next village."

Later that same morning, one of the servants in the household asked Ali Osman, "What was all that noise in your room last night?"

Ali Osman thought, "Oh, my God, I hope that no one here finds out about the forty beautiful girls!" To the servant he said, "Here is a silver coin for you. Please say nothing about the noise you heard last night."

The next day Ali Osman left the ağa's house and went on to his own village and his parents' home. His father and mother, who had been weeping since his disappearance, were greatly relieved to see their son alive and well again. After they had greeted him, they said, "Dear Son, last night someone came along and handed us through an open window a large quantity of silver coins. We could not see the person

Story 955

who did this, and we could not understand what all this meant."

Ali Osman smiled at them and said, "Just wait until evening comes, and then you will see what will happen!"

That night after dark they closed up all the doors and windows of the house. Ali Osman then lighted one of the magic candles with one of the magic matches. The forty girls appeared. They danced and sang, and when they departed at dawn, each left behind her forty kilos of silver coins. This went on night after night, and as a result Ali and his parents became very rich, so rich, in fact, that their wealth became obvious to everyone. It was not long before word of this reached the governor of the province. Soon the kaymakam⁴ of that district came to Ali Osman's house, questioned him and his parents about the source of their wealth, and confiscated all of the magic candles and magic matches. The kaymakam then delivered these magic objects to the governor.

When night arrived at the governor's mansion, the governor said to his wife, "Do not be frightened by what you

⁴ A kaymakam is the federally appointed chief executive officer of a kaza, an administrative unit roughly equivalent to an American county in size. The kaza is made up of a city, large or small (comparable to a county seat), and the villages which cluster around it.

Story 955

are going to see. When I light one of these magic candles with a magic match, forty beautiful girls will appear, each wearing on her skirt four kilos of silver coins. They will sing and dance for us until dawn, at which time they will leave their silver coins for us and depart.

But, unknown to the governor or to anyone else, there among the candles one that was different from all the rest. It controlled not forty beautiful girls who danced and sang, but forty black men with sticks who beat those who had called them forth. By chance it was this different candle that the governor lighted. The forty black men appeared at once and beat the governor and his wife throughout the entire night. In the morning the very miserable governor ordered his men to take the candles and matches back to their owner, Ali Osman