

Story 1104 (1966 Tape 10)

Narrator: Mrs. Sümer (mother of Faruk Sümer)

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Hasan Bey the Mouse Child

Mouse child

Ch. (blessness)

There were once a man and his wife who lived alone without any children. They had never had a child, and now they were growing old. The man worked every day in his fields, and his wife stayed at home inside the house. There was no one to take the man's lunch to him. One day the man said, "O God, if only you would give me a child, I should not care what it was like. We should be thankful for it even if it were only a mouse!"

mouse

Baby

One day shortly after that the woman became pregnant, after the usual time, she gave birth to a child. It was only a mouse child, but both the man and his wife were very pleased with it. They named the child Hasan Bey. The woman said, "I am so happy to have a son who can take his father's lunch to the fields!"

The time soon came when the mouse child was old enough to carry his father's lunch. The woman prepared the lunch and placed it in the donkey's saddlebag. Then she said to the mouse child, "Hasan Bey, your father is in such-and-such a field. Do you know where that field is?"

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"Yes, Mother, I do." Saying this, Hasan Bey jumped upon the donkey and climbed into its ear so that the animal would surely be able to hear his commands. "Deh!"¹ he shouted to start the donkey toward the field. Then as the donkey walked along, the child sang out, "They call me Hasan Bey! I am taking food to my father. Have you ever seen a child as helpful to his parents as I am?"

The mouse child directed the donkey to the field where his father was working. When the man looked up, he was startled to see the riderless donkey approaching. It was such a strange sight that the man became frightened and started to run away. Seeing this, the child shouted, "Father, Father, don't run away! It is I, your son, Hasan Bey! Don't run away! Come and get your food!"

"But where are you?" asked his father.

"Look, I am here!" Hasan Bey said as he climbed out of the donkey's ear and sat on top of its head. "Father, eat your lunch, and I shall then take the dishes back."

"Very well," said the man, and he proceeded to eat his lunch. When he had finished eating, he put the dishes back

¹ Instead of saying "Giddap" and "Whoa" to beasts of burden, Turks order them to start and stop, respectively, with the commands "Deh" and "Choosh".

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into the saddlebag. "Take these back now," he said, "and carry my greetings to your mother.

"Yes, Father," said the child, and, singing a song, directed the donkey homeward. The donkey became thirsty along the way, and when they came to a fountain, the donkey began drinking water

Hasan Bey said to himself, "While the donkey is drinking, I shall climb to the top of this poplar tree here and see what I can see." He climbed slowly to the top of this tall tree and looked down. To his surprise, he saw that during his long climb, three thieves had gathered at the foot of the tree, where they were trying to divide among themselves a bag of gold. The mouse whistled loudly, and when the thieves heard this, they thought that the police were after them. In fright, they ran away, leaving the gold beneath the tree. The mouse child then climbed down and filled the saddlebag with gold. Singing a song again, he then guided the donkey the rest of the way home

When Hasan Bey arrived home, he was met by his mother, who said, "Oh, my son, even if you are just a mouse child, you are a blessing to us. You took your father's food to him

"Mother, look and see what is in the saddlebag!"

"Son, what is all this?" asked the mother as she looked at the gold.

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"Put it aside until Father comes home. Then tomorrow have the workers come to this house." That evening when the man returned home, his son explained to him all that had happened.

In the morning workers arrived, tore down the old house, and began building in its place a palace. Across the road from the palace they built a fountain and chained to it a golden cup from which passersby could drink water. On the front of the palace was placed a sign which read "Hasan Bey the Mouse's Palace," and on the the fountain was put a sign which read "Hasan Bey the Mouse's Fountain."

Hasan Bey then ordered, "Have a golden cage built and place that golden cage on top of the palace. Sitting in that cage, I can watch over the whole area." When the palace and the cage were completed, Hasan Bey spent much of his time sitting in the cage and looking over the countryside. He and his parents lived very comfortably from that time onward.