

Story 1176 (1976 Tape 4)

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Location: Yakacık village,
Söğüt kaza, Bilecik
Province

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The Girl and the Dead Prince

Once there was and once there was not, and back in that time, there was a family made up of a father, a mother, and their daughter. Every day the father would bring home some tripe. The daughter would take this tripe to a nearby brook and wash it clean. They would then use this tripe to make tripe soup. One day the girl went as usual to the brook to wash the tripe, but this time a ⁵⁷⁻⁵⁸crow appeared there and said to her, "There are three important events in your ²¹¹kismet that will soon occur.¹ Give me a piece of tripe, and I shall tell you what they are."

When she returned to her home, the girl reported to her parents what the crow had said to her. Neither of her parents knew what to make of the crow's remark. On the following day

¹The narrator is not a very competent storyteller, as several of her earlier tales demonstrated. The crow will tell her just one forthcoming experience, not three. The narrator is here applying a formulaic opening found in many tales, an opening scene in which (1) a supernatural being or (2) speaking bird or animal gives the protagonist either (1) three pieces of sage advice or (2) three magic objects. For tales of the present type, the spokesman of Fate usually says, "It is your kismet to undergo a hardship of a certain kind," and the hardship is then explained and ultimately does occur.

Her mother, August
spoke by
said it

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the crow again appeared at the brook while she was cleaning tripe and repeated his remark: "There are three important events in your kismet that will soon occur. Give me a piece of tripe, and I shall tell you what they are."

Eager to know what he meant by this, the girl threw the crow a piece of tripe and said, "Very well, then! Please tell me what they are."

The crow answered, "You will watch beside a dead body for forty days and forty nights."

she returned home that day and told her parents what the crow had said, her father answered, "Hey! Why should you have to wait beside a dead body? Let us move out of this village immediately so that you can avoid such an experience."

Accordingly, they packed up their belongings and departed from that village. After they had traveled for some distance, they came upon what seemed to be a deserted palace. Entering this palace, the girl searched through it, opening door after door as she made her way through the building. On one of the upper floors, she entered a room in which she found a handsome young prince lying in a bed. He was dead. Returning to her parents, she said, "Father, I have found the kismet which I cannot escape. This is the place where I am to wait beside a dead man for forty days. You can leave me here

The girl then began her long vigil beside the dead body. She sat and waited beside it for forty days and forty nights

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As the fortieth day was coming to an end, the bold daughter of a mule driver entered the palace and found her way to the room where the dead man lay.² After she had entered that room, the dead man revived. Looking around, he asked, "Who was it that sat beside me for forty days and forty nights?"

The bold daughter of the mule driver said at once, "I did!"

Because the prince believed the bold girl and had accepted her as his wife, the girl who had watched beside him for forty and forty nights said nothing.

On the following day the prince decided to go to a nearby bazaar to buy supplies. After asking the bold girl what she wanted, he said to her, "Go to that other girl's room and see what she wants brought from the market."

"No, I shall not ask her," replied the bold girl.

So the prince himself went to that girl's room, opened the door, and said, "Lady, please tell me if there is anything that would like to have me bring to you from the bazaar."

"All I want is a patience stone and a patience knife,"³ said the girl.

The prince went to the market and bought there the various things that he had come for. The merchant from whom he bought

²Better raconteurs have a plausible patter of causation here to explain how the daughter of the mule driver reached this place and knew about the vigil beside the prince.

³These are literal translations of sabır taşı and sabır bıçağı.

*Dead -
servant
from*

market place

patience stone

*the stone
of*

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the patience stone and the patience knife said to the prince, "When you deliver these objects to the person who requested them, listen to what that person says to them."

The prince returned to the palace and gave the girls the things that he had bought for them. After he had delivered the patience stone and the patience knife, he lingered outside the girl's door in order to overhear what she said to them. The girl said, "Oh, my stone! Oh, my knife! That mule driver's bold daughter came and snatched from my hands the young man whom I had faithfully attended for forty days and forty nights!"⁴

When the prince heard this, he opened the door again and re-entered the girl's room. "So it was really you who waited for me!"

"Yes, it was I," she answered.

Going at once to the daughter of the mule driver, the prince asked her, "Do you want forty mules or forty swords?"⁵

The girl said, "What should I do with forty swords? Give

⁴The inept narrator has omitted the denouement of the stone-of-patience syndrome: even the hard stone cracks apart at the pathos of the girl's situation. The prince thereupon rushes into the room to prevent the girl's attempt to kill herself with the knife he has brought her.

⁵This is a traditional way in folktales of allowing a condemned person to name his or her own means of execution. Here, as in many other tales, the culprit does not recognize that both options are fatal.

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me forty mules, and I shall leave

They tied the bold girl to forty mules. When the mules all started running in different directions, she was torn into many small pieces

The prince then married the girl who had waited by his seemingly dead body. The two of them are still living there at that palace. I just returned last night from visiting them.