

Story 1444 (1976 Tape 30)

Narrator: Ali Çiftçi, in 60s
in 1970s

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Sarıkaya kaza,
Yozgat Province

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The Money That Caused and Cured Trouble

Once in the past there was a man who had written on one of the outside corners of his house this message:

those whose feet lead them here should learn

money is the key to all power on earth.

Money makes trouble no trouble at all.

With wealth I can drive all their troubles away.

When the padishah was traveling about the countryside, he came across that house and read the sign on its corner. He was offended by the message on the sign, but he said nothing about it at the time. He simply wrote down in his notebook the address of that house.

Some time later when the padishah was back in his palace, he sent two soldiers to bring the owner of that house to him. When the soldiers arrived there, they discovered that the original owner of the house, who had written the offensive message, had died. They therefore took to the palace the original owner's son, the young man who now lived in the house.

When this young man was shown into the padishah's presence, the ruler said to him, "Son of a pimp, you have written on your

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house this message:

those whose feet lead them here should learn
That money is the key to all power on earth
Money makes trouble no trouble at all
With wealth I can drive all their troubles away.

Now I am going to give you both money and trouble, and we shall see whether or not money will get you out of trouble."

The young man kept trying to tell the padishah that it was not he who had placed the sign on his house. He said this several times, but the padishah paid no attention to what he was saying.

The padishah said, "My daughter is kept behind seven gates in a covered garden where she is protected by seventy guards. She also has forty personal servants of her own. If you can impregnate my daughter, you will thereby save your life; if you cannot accomplish that, you will be beheaded.¹ Now go and see if you can save yourself with money!"

The young man left the palace wondering how he could escape the danger in which the padishah had placed him. He remembered a witch woman² who had helped several people with

¹The Turkish here says literally, ". . . your head will be delivered to the executioners."

²In Turkish folktales, the word witch has various connotations. It may be a person associated with cosmic evil. It may be a person with supernatural powers who may or may not

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their own particular problems, and so he decided to consult her about his difficulty. He located this woman and explained to her his difficulty.

The witch woman said, "You said that you have faith in the power of money, but do you also have a large amount of money to use in order to save yourself?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then let us go and start the work that will need to be done." Saying this, she led him to a jewelry shop. There she said to the jeweler, "Can you make us a very special likeness of a ram? This ram must be made of gold on one side and silver on the other. The golden side must be studded with emeralds and the silver side must be studded with rubies. It must be large enough inside to hold a human being. Finally, the one on the inside must be able to see outside, but those on the outside must not be able to see inside

"Yes, I can make such a ram for you.

"How much will it cost?"

also be a ghoul. With or without supernatural powers, it may be an old woman available for hire to undertake nefarious deeds of various kinds. In this latest capacity, she may be simply a shrewd, wily, and unscrupulous accomplice in covert action against someone.

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"100,000 Turkish liras, but I must have 50,000 right now in order to buy the necessary supplies."

"Here are 50,000 liras," said the boy and handed the jeweler that amount.

"How many days will it take you to complete this work?" asked the witch woman.

will be ready in a week

After a week the witch woman and the young man returned to the jewelry shop and found that the gold and silver ram was indeed ready. After the young man had paid the remaining 50,000 liras, the witch woman said to him, "Get inside the ram." After he had done this, the witch snapped the top shut. Then holding a handful of grass before the ram, she said, "Bır, bır!"³ and the ram followed her

Leading the ram to the palace in this way, the witch went into the presence of the padishah and said, "Your majesty, my husband has gone on a pilgrimage to Mecca.⁴ I am afraid to

³Turkish tales often have "Hır, hır" or a similar sound used to call mules and donkeys. Whether or not "Bır, bır!" is commonly used for calling sheep is not clear.

⁴Making the pilgrimage at least once to Mecca is considered an obligation of all Moslems who can afford to make the trip.

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keep this very valuable ram in our home while he is away, thieves may steal it. I should like to leave this ram of ours not only in trust to Allah but also in trust to you. May I leave it here in the palace until my husband returns?"

"Very well," said the padishah. "You may leave it here.

Everyone in the palace played with the ram, leading it here and there by saying, "Bir, bir!" The padishah's daughter heard about the golden and silver ram and requested that father send it to her quarters. The padishah did as she requested, and the girl and her servants played with the ram all day. When night came, the servants helped the princess get into bed and then lighted several candles in the room. With their work done for the day, the servants then went to their own rooms and went to bed.

After the princess had gone to sleep, the young man came out of the ram. He threw the room into great disorder, tossing pillows on the floor and moving all of the candles to different places. After that, he kissed the princess and then returned into the ram.

When the princess woke up the next morning, she was surprised to see her room in such confusion. After her servants had arrived, she asked them, "What did you do to this room to leave it in such a state of confusion?"

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They answered, "Our princess, we put you into your bed, covered you up, and lighted all of your candles. We then bade you good-night and went to our own rooms. We have only now come back, and we do not know who did this."

After thinking for a minute, the princess said, "There must be something strange about this ram. No one can get into this room, for it is behind seven doors and watched by seventy guards. Not even a bird can enter this room. In fact, not even smoke can get into it. I shall eventually discover who upset everything in this room."

Again they played throughout the day, and much of the time they were playing with the ram. Again at the end of day, the servants put the girl to bed, bade her good-night, and went to their own rooms. This time, however, the princess was determined not to fall asleep. She cut her little finger and poured salt in the wound so that the pain would keep her awake. Then she pretended to fall into a deep sleep. As soon as the young man thought that she was asleep, he opened the top of the ram and climbed out. As he had done the night before, he began to disrupt the order of the room, throwing pillows and kilims⁵ around and changing the positions of all

⁵A flat woven rug, not the more expensive tied rug generally known as an "Oriental carpet."

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the candles. As he bent to kiss the princess, however, she grabbed him and asked, "Are you a jinn or some other kind of supernatural creature?"⁶

The boy answered, "I am neither a jinn nor any other kind of supernatural being but a believer in Allah, who created both you and me.

"Why have you come here?"

The boy then explained the whole situation. "My father had a sign made which he placed on an outside corner of our house. The sign bore this message:

All those whose feet lead them here should learn

That money is the key to all power on earth.

Money makes trouble no trouble at all.

With wealth I can drive all their troubles away.

"When your father was traveling in our part of the country, he saw that sign and was displeased with it. Calling me to the palace, he said, 'I am going to give you much money and an equally great amount of trouble, and we shall see whether the

⁶If a person appears suddenly in an unlikely place, the viewer quite understandably becomes wary of the true nature of the intruder. The formulaic query in Turkish is *İnmisin cinmisin?*--are you a jinn or other supernatural being? In some early interpretations of the word *in*, it seems to have meant human being, and so the response then is, "I am human and not a jinn." But in most uses of this expression in Archive holdings, the question seems to be that given in the text above, for otherwise the response "Neither" would make no sense.

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money can save you from the trouble. My daughter is behind seven doors and under the watch of seventy guards. Besides that, she has forty servants who take care of her. If you can make my daughter pregnant, you will have saved your life; if you cannot do that, you will be beheaded.' I have spent much of my own money as well as money your father gave me in order to get here. So I came here with a sword against my neck. If you wish to cut off my head, you may do so; or, if you wish to save me, you may do that too."

The girl thought about this for a minute, and then she concluded that it must have been the will of Allah that had brought the boy to her room through so many obstacles. She therefore decided to sleep with the boy for the rest of that night.

On the following day, the witch woman went to the palace and was admitted into the presence of the padishah. She said "Your majesty, my husband has returned from Mecca. May I take home the property I left in your care?"

"It is in the covered garden with my daughter. You may go and get it."

The witch woman went to the garden and got the ram led it to her home by holding grass before it and saying, "Bir, bir!" When they got there, she opened the top of the ram and

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let the boy climb out. She then asked, "Son, are you a wolf or are you a sheep?"

"I am a wolf," he replied

"Is everything all right?"

"Yes."

"Very well, then, son. Give me the fee we had agreed on for my service to you." He immediately paid her this fee and departed

Now let us see what is going on at the palace. Time passed and time passed, and after six months the padishah's daughter began to show definite signs of pregnancy. Her belly grew large and her face grew pale. Her mother, hearing that the princess was not well, went to see her. She found her daughter with a pale face, a swollen belly, and the appearance of a sick person. She went at once to the padishah and said, "May you fall apart into many pieces! You have put our daughter behind seven doors and under the watch of seventy guards in the covered garden, but she never sees the sunshine, she never sees any people except her forty servants, and she never breathes fresh air. As a result, she has grown sick and pale."

"How can that be?" asked the padishah. "Bring her here."

After the girl had been brought, doctors were sent for. When these doctors examined the girl, they discovered that she

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was not ill at all, but that she had a baby inside of her. The chief of the doctors went to her father and said, "Padishah, shall I tell you the truth about your daughter or shall I tell you a lie about her? The truth is that your daughter is not in any way ill. She looks the way she does because she has within her a baby."

"What?" demanded the padishah. "I shall pull it out of her by the roots. She has been kept behind seven doors, under the watch of seventy guards, and attended by forty female servants. Who could possibly have managed to come anywhere near her?" Calling his daughter to his presence, he said, "I am going to have you executed, and so before you die, you might as well tell me who got you into this condition."

"Father, did you send a ram to me?"

"Yes, I did."

"Well, whatever happened to me happened as a result of that ram's being in my room."

The padishah thought again about the gold and silver ram decorated with emeralds and rubies, and he knew that it must have cost a very large amount of money. He realized then who it was who had impregnated his daughter. He called the boy into his presence and asked him, "How much of your own money did you have to spend to accomplish this?"

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"This much," said the boy, and he handed the padishah a piece of paper with the amount written on it.

The padishah said, "Here is money to repay you for that amount. Now go and make arrangements with a hoca to conduct the wedding ceremony.

The wedding celebration lasted for forty days and forty nights, after which the owner of the golden and silver ram married the princess. "You have won this bride by overcoming your trouble with money," the padishah said to the bridegroom.