

Story 1650 (1970 Tape 10)      Narrator: İbrahim Gürsoy

Location: Çamlıdere, kaza  
town of Ankara  
Province

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The Innocent Maiden Maligned and Persecuted<sup>1</sup>

Once a man was going to Hejaz /Mecca.<sup>2</sup> Before he left, he directed his younger brother to take care of his sister-in-law and protect her. But the pilgrim's wife wouldn't show herself to anyone, including her brother-in-law. One day when he had brought some things she had asked for, she showed him her face a little. She was a beautiful woman, and he fell in love with her. He came and began to pester her. She tried to get rid of him, saying, "Your brother left me under your care and protection. This is not the right thing to do," and so on.

The brother tried slandering her, saying, "While my brother was away at Hejaz, this woman was unfaithful to him." He took the case to court, and when asked if he had any witnesses, he said, "Yes."

<sup>1</sup>This tale was an exemplum interpolated into ATON 297. Because it is a tale complete unto itself (with more than a dozen variants in ATON), we have extracted it from ATON 297 and given it independent status. This prevents its being "lost" in the larger tale.

<sup>2</sup>"Going to Mecca" means making a religious pilgrimage to that sacred city of Islam.

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The judge sentenced the woman to be buried to the waist and stoned. The woman was buried and stoned.

Later, a traveler who was passing along the road went by her. He heard someone moaning. He looked and saw that a woman was buried among stones. He went and pulled her out and asked her what was the matter

She said, "It was such and such. I was slandered and buried here

He brought her to his own house and told her she could live there as his sister. When the woman had recovered, however, the man's slave now started pestering her. When she refused to have anything to do with him, the slave killed his own child and left the bloody knife in the woman's bed. When the child's mother awoke, she saw that her child was killed. The bloody knife was found in the other woman's bed

The slave said, "You see what the woman you brought home did to us? She killed our child. Therefore, I'll kill that woman

The woman cried and told the master she had done no such thing.

know," he said, "that you haven't, but this man may kill you. You had better leave." He gave her some

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pocket money, and she left.

On the way, she came to a square where there was a big crowd. They were going to hang someone there. She asked, "What did the man do whom they will hang?"

They explained, "He owed the state a great amount of money in taxes. That's why they are hanging him."

She said, "If that man's taxes are paid, would he be saved from hanging?"

They answered, "Yes

She paid the money, and the man was released. The man thus saved said, "I want to see the person who saved me from hanging.

They showed him the woman. When he saw her, he was enamored of her and he started pestering the woman now. "You saved me from hanging, and we two shall get married," he said.

"I have a husband who went to Hejaz on pilgrimage. He will be back, and a woman can't have two husbands. I was sorry for you and saved you," she said.

"I wish you hadn't saved me," he said. "You got me from the fire, but threw me into the water." He then followed the woman wherever she went. He met a caravan

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and sold her to the caravan driver. This time they started pestering the woman, and finally they sold her to someone on a ship.

When the woman was traveling on the ship, the people on the ship started molesting her. She resisted these people. During a storm, the ship was damaged, and the crew were all killed. Then it had to be towed ashore, and the woman was the only survivor. She went to the governor of the city and said, "I came on the wrecked ship. The other people on the ship all died. There are goods of various kinds in the ship. Take those

The governor took the things from the ship. Then the woman asked the governor to build a small cell where she might spend her time praying. To make it brief, they built her a cell, and the woman prayed there for the sick. Her reputation as a healer soon spread all over the country.

It happened that her brother-in-law, who had abused her so, became blind, and the slave had contracted an itching manginess, and the other one the debtor she had saved from the gallows had some other illness.

The pilgrim was back from the Hejaz, and the people explained what had happened. When the pilgrim heard this,

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he said to his brother, "Brother, they are saying such and such things. Let us go to that woman. Maybe she heal your blindness." Her reputation was known through the land.

They went and stopped where the slave lived. The slave's master took him, and the other fellow was also taken along. They all reached the place where the woman was. They submitted their applications to the cell of woman. When the woman looked, she recognized all three. She said to them, "You stay here today, and I'll heal tomorrow." In the meantime, she reported to the governor and asked him to gather the people in the square, saying, "Three people came, and I want to pray for them in public."

The governor said, "All right," and he assembled people.

The next day, she spoke to the crowd as follows: prayers for these three men will not be accepted unless they confess their sins."

The one whom she had saved from hanging said, "I committed such and such a crime." The other one the slave also told his crime.

When it was time for the pilgrim's brother, he couldn't make a confession, but the woman said, "You'll have to, or

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you won't be healed and you'll have to go as you came."

brother insisted: "Brother, we have taken all this trouble to come here. You must tell.

"Brother, I cannot," he said.

"You must do so."

I cannot."

you can't, you will not be cured and you'll have to leave as you came."

course, none of them recognized the woman. Finally, when the man realized he had to make a confession to be cured, he did. He said, "The matter is such and such." He said he had treated a woman badly and as a result had become blind

The woman then started praying for them and said that she had forgiven them and said that their health would be restored only by her absolving them of their obligations to her /making them helal,<sup>3</sup> i.e.].

husband then recognized her and took her back.

<sup>3</sup>Helal/Haram--Moslem religious concepts. That which is helal is that which is permissible according to canonical law. That which is haram is forbidden. There is no obligation or restriction or penalty for doing or taking whatever is helal, but there will be a penalty on Judgment Day for doing or taking what is forbidden. To accept something from a donor is helal; to take it or steal it is haram. To do anything morally or religiously improper is

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haram. Dying or endangered people often declare helal anything they have given to or done for another person, so that No. 2 will not go to Judgment indebted to another (which is haram unless declared helal by the benefactor).