

Story 1777 (1994 Tape 4)

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Erzurum Province

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Silly Women Mourn Death of Imagined Child

Once a mother and her daughter took a long walk together. After they had gone some distance, they felt tired, and so they sat down to rest near a bridge that passed over a stream. It was very pleasant there.

They had been sitting there for only a few minutes, however, when the daughter began to cry. She said, "Mother, suppose I were to get married and live in that village over there. Suppose after a while I have a son, and suppose I name him Lokman Bey. If he should go to visit you, he might fall off this bridge and drown in the stream. I cannot help crying for poor little Lokman Bey!"

"I cannot help crying either," said her mother, and she too began to sob. They both cried for two or three hours. The daughter cried so hard that her eyes were red and her face was swollen.

After a while the girl's brother came along. He looked at his mother and his sister and asked, "Mother, what is the matter? Sister, what is the matter?"

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The woman explained the situation to him. "What if my daughter were to marry and then live in this village? What if she should then have a son? What if she should name that son Lokman Bey? What if Lokman Bey started walking to my village to visit me? What if he should fall off this bridge and drown in the stream below? Wouldn't that be very sad? Shouldn't his mother cry? Shouldn't I, his grandmother, cry? Shouldn't you, as his uncle, cry?"

"Yes, I should cry." But after saying that, he cut a switch from a tree and proceeded to strike his sister once and his mother twice with that switch. Threatening to strike them more, he drove them back home.