

Story 2102 (1988 Tape 16)

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Location: Aydın, capital of
Aydın Province

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The Inevitable Bride

One day an old man sat on the bank of the Menderes River with a small pile of willow sticks beside him. He was carefully selecting pairs of sticks from that pile, and when he was satisfied with the selection he had made, he threw the matched sticks into the river.

One of the sons of Aydın Bey¹ was hunting in that area, and when he saw the old man working on the riverbank, he rode over to him and asked, "Grandfather, what are you doing here?"

"My son, I am a matchmaker. I am putting together boys and girls who will later become spouses, and those future mates are represented by these sticks. When I find a pair who will someday be married, I put them together and throw their sticks into the river."

The young man asked, "Have you matched any girl with

¹In the tribal, Seljuk, and Ottoman eras a bey was a landed aristocrat. Some beys were wealthy and/or politically powerful. There are no such beys in the Republic of Turkey, though the word bey has survived as an honorific placed after the first name of a distinguished male or perhaps any male to whom one wishes to show respect: Ahmet Bey, Hasan Bey.

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me?"

The old man answered, "Yes, I have, my son. I have matched you with the daughter of the shepherd Deli Mehmet."

Aydın Bey's son was shocked by this information. He exclaimed, "What? Do you know who I am?"

"No, I don't. Who are you?"

The young man answered, "I am the son of Aydın Bey, the ruler of this area

"It does not matter who you are. I have matched you with that girl."

The son of Aydın Bey asked, "Do you know where that shepherd lives?"

"Yes, he lives in the neighborhood of Kaymak."²

Having acquired this much information about the girl said to be his future bride, the young man was very upset. He at once rode to the neighborhood where that girl was said to be living. When he reached Kaymak, he saw some boys and girls playing in the street. He called to them, "Children, do you know where the home of shepherd Deli Mehmet is located?"

A girl among the children asked, "What do you want with Deli Mehmet? He is my father."

²Since the time of this story, the town of Kaymak was renamed Kızılhisar.

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"Are you really his daughter?" asked the son of Aydın

"Yes, I am," she responded

Upon hearing this, the son of Aydın Bey grabbed her hand. Next he seized the girl herself and threw her up into the air. Then, hoping to kill her, he placed his sword beneath her as she fell back to earth. Although she was not wounded fatally, she did receive a gash in one leg that ran from her knee to her toes. The son of Aydın Bey quickly rode away thinking that she would die

When the girl's parents were informed about this incident, they rushed their daughter to a doctor, who cleaned the wound and stitched it together. Whatever medicine the doctor put on that wound, it did in time heal it completely

After some time had passed, the territory controlled by Aydın Bey was conquered by a more powerful ruler. Aydın Bey and his family fled from that area and moved to Egypt. Meanwhile the shepherd Deli Mehmet and his wife had both died, leaving their daughter an orphan. By coincidence, she was adopted by the governor of Egypt and his wife, who had long been childless and were attracted by the beautiful orphan.

After the refugees from Turkey had lived in Egypt for

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several years, the daughter of the shepherd Deli Mehmet had reached a marriageable age. She had become the most attractive woman in all Egypt. One day the son of Aydın Bey saw her in a marketplace and fell in love with her at once. He asked a man standing near him, "Do you happen to know whose daughter that girl is?"

"She is the daughter of the governor of Egypt," the man replied.

The young man returned home at once and requested his parents to ask for the daughter of the governor of Egypt as his bride. On the following day they went to the palace and asked for the hand of the governor's daughter for their son. After an agreement on this matter had been reached, a wedding celebration was begun. It lasted for several days, and when it was concluded, the bride and groom were led to the nuptial chamber.

There the groom was surprised to see a long scar on one of the bride's legs, a scar reaching from her knee to her toes. He asked her, "How did this injury occur?"

The bride replied, "I am not the blood daughter of the governor but an adopted child. My real father was the shepherd Deli Mehmet from the Turkish area of Aydın.

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Following the death of both my father and my mother, governor of Egypt adopted me."

After learning the name of his wife's real father, the husband realized that this was the girl whom he once intended to kill. He was now convinced that there was no way of escaping Fate. He confessed his evil behavior to his wife and asked for her forgiveness. This she granted, and after that they lived a long and happy life together.