Story 2131 (1984 Tape 8)  

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Dilber Belatedly Receives  
What She Deserves  

There was once a man who lived with his wife and their grown daughter in a small village. They were very poor, and life was difficult for them. When that man died, his family was left with no support of any kind. One day while the girl was working in their garden, she was approached by an aged dervish. He said to her, "Daughter here is a gift that will help you throughout your life. It is a magic ring. As long as you wear this ring, you will have special powers and unusual abilities, but if the ring is ever removed from your finger, your life will be endangered."  

After placing the ring on her finger, she

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1 In Turkish folktales there is a wide range of what may be called life tokens. Talismans and amulets are often much more than simple good-luck charms, for they are integrally related to the physical condition or even life itself of a human being or other creature. Some life tokens are separable souls hidden in some secret place—a box, the stomach of a deer, the stomach of a fish—in order to protect the lives of their owners. Sometimes, on the other hand, the life token must be kept in the possession of its owner. If it is taken away, the owner may lose consciousness or be transformed into some other form. Sometimes a life token is a gauge
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started to thank the old man, but there was no one there to thank. He had disappeared as quickly as he had arrived.

After that, wherever the girl walked, grass sprang up beneath her feet.\(^2\) Whenever she cried, her tears were turned into pearls and gold coins. Whenever she laughed, roses would fall from her blooming cheeks. The girl was at first mystified when such things happened, but soon she realized that they must be caused by her magic ring.

As time passed, the news about her special powers began to spread throughout the land. People were saying, "There is a remarkable girl living in such and such a place. Her footsteps cause grass to grow. When she smiles, roses bloom on her cheeks. When she cries, pearls and gold coins fall from her eyes instead of tears.

This news finally reached the ears of the padishah. That ruler thought, "If there really is such a girl, she"

of a person's condition and is watched closely by its owner's friends or relatives in order to keep posted on the welfare of the owner. It may be a gem which changes color if its owner is in serious trouble; it may be a knife which turns rusty for the same reason.

\(^2\)Until modern times many Turkish people led pastoral lives—sometimes nomadic, sometimes sedentary. For them grass was much more than mere ground cover for a lawn. It was essential to the flocks which provided their livelihood.
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could become an excellent wife for my son." He decided, however, that he himself should test the reputed powers of that girl. He went to the girl's home, where he found her working in the garden. He said to her, "Daughter, will you please bring me a cup of water?" He noticed that as she went for the water, grass sprang up wherever she stepped. When she returned with the water, she smiled as she handed it to the padishah, and several roses bloomed on her cheeks. When she was saddened by something that he said, pearls and gold pieces fell from her eyes. Everything that the ruler had heard about the girl proved to be true.

Because the girl had no father, the padishah introduced himself to her mother. "I am the padishah of this land, and these people with me are my family. We are here to ask for the hand of your daughter in marriage to our son." After the mother had accepted that proposal, the padishah said, "Let us have the wedding at such and such a place on so and so date."

Time passed, and the day for the wedding was approaching. However, when the royal coach arrived to take the girl to the distant place where the wedding was to held, a problem arose. The mother was too ill to accompany her daughter,
but she did not want the girl to go alone. She decided to have the girl escorted to the wedding by her aunt, girl's closest relative.

Unfortunately, the aunt did not like her niece at all. She was extremely jealous that it was her niece and not her own daughter who was to marry the prince. This became quite clear as the aunt, her own daughter, and her niece started traveling in the royal coach. The aunt sat beside the bride and she kept giving the girl very salty food to eat. After the bride had been eating this salty food for awhile, she became thirsty and asked for some water to drink. The aunt responded, "We have with us no water except this cupful I have in my hand." When the girl begged for a drop of that water, the aunt said, "If will give me one of your eyes, I shall give you a of water." The girl tried to tolerate her thirst, but soon she could not stand it any longer. She again begged water, and again the aunt answered, "If you will give me one of your eyes, I shall give you a drop of water." The girl finally took out one of her eyes and handed it to her aunt. But, of course, the drop of water which she received was not enough to quench her burning thirst. When
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she begged for more, the aunt said, "I could give you more water in exchange for your other eye." The girl gave her second eye, becoming then totally blind. A short while later the aunt threw the blind girl from the coach on a mountaintop. She then continued on to the wedding, pretending that her own daughter was the bride.

The girl abandoned on the mountaintop cried and cried and cried. After awhile a woodcutter passing that way heard that noise. "What is that noise?" he asked himself. Tracing the sound to its source, the woodcutter soon found the blind girl. He asked, "Why are you crying? What happened to you, my daughter?"

"My own aunt made me blind and left me here."

Upon hearing that, the man decided not to cut wood but to assist this poor girl. He helped her onto the back of his donkey, and then he took her to his own home.

Meanwhile, the aunt attended the wedding and gave her own daughter to the padishah's son as bride. The groom was eager to test the special powers of the girl. He took her out for a walk that evening, but no grass grew from the places on which she had stepped. He made her laugh, but no roses appeared on her cheeks. He made her cry, but no pearls or gold pieces fell from her eyes. When the
prince asked her why she was unable to perform any of
special feats, she answered, "Now that I am married, it
will be a whole year before roses will again bloom on my
cheeks." She was trying in this way to extend her stay
in the palace.

Back at the home of the woodcutter, the blind girl
was treated kindly. She accepted the woodcutter as a second
father. After she had lived there for awhile, the girl felt
comfortable enough to smile. When a rose appeared, she said
to the woodcutter, "Take this rose to the palace. Walk back
and forth before the palace shouting, 'A rose out of season!
A rose out of season!' Because there are no other roses at
this time of the year, the people in the palace will be
willing to pay whatever price you ask for it. When they
ask you what the price will be, say, 'A rose like this
will cost you an eye.

The woodcutter no longer had to work in the forest,
for he had become wealthy from the pearls and gold coins
that had fallen from the girl's eyes. His house was full of
money. He had plenty of time, therefore, to carry out the
blind girl's request. "Very well, daughter, I shall do
what you have indicated." He took the rose and went to
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the palace. It was winter, and there were no roses anywhere, even in the rose garden of the padishah. Taking the rose, he went to the palace and began shouting, "A rose out of season! A rose out of season!"

Both the false bride and her mother heard his announcement. The false bride said, "Mother, will you ask him how much such a rose would cost?"

Going to a window, the mother called down, "Hey, rose seller, how much would such a flower cost?"

"It will cost an eye," he answered.

The false bride said, "Mother, we still have my stepsister's eyes. Let us give him one of them and get that rose."

"All right," said the mother, and she then proceeded to exchange an eye for the rose.

The woodcutter returned and gave the eye to his houseguest. The girl replaced the eye in its socket, and part of her vision was restored.

Back at the palace the false bride said to her husband, "Here is a rose for you. Although we have not been married for a full year, when I smiled today, this rose bloomed on my cheek."
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When the prince smelled the rose, he said, "What a wonderful scent it has!" What he did not know, however, was the fact that when he inhaled the aroma of the rose, the true bride became instantly pregnant.3

Time passed, and one day the girl at the woodcutter's home smiled again and produced another special rose. She at once handed this flower to the woodcutter and asked him to sell it at the palace for another eye. This he did. When it was returned to its original socket, it restored the full vision of the true bride.

But after the second special rose appeared out of season at the palace, the aunt of the true bride became worried. She realized that the marvelous rose must have been produced by her niece, and she feared the consequences of the prince's learning about the true bride. The aunt therefore hired a witch4 to discover the whereabouts of

3This is Motif T532.1.1.1 Conception from smelling a flower. The one who inhales the floral scent may be either the woman or her lover. If the scent is inhaled by a female who has no lover or male friend, the "father" may be the Divine Spirit, as it is in the long and complex ATON tale 672, "The Ordeal of Lətif Shah and His Family." This immaculate conception is a major element in several religions.

4In 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 also be a ghoul. With or without such powers, it may be an
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the true bride. After the witch woman had located her at
the home of the woodcutter, she reported this to the girl's
aunt. That evil woman said to the witch, "That girl wears a
magic ring on her finger. If you can bring that ring to me,
I shall give you a whole bucket of gold coins. Have no
fear of the girl, for she will die as soon as the ring
has been removed from her finger."

The old woman said, "I can do it." She then went at
evening to the home of the woodcutter. When the woodcutter
answered her knock on the door, she asked him, "Could
you give lodging for the night to a poor old woman?" Both
the woodcutter and the true bride agreed to accept the woman
as an overnight guest. While the woodcutter and the true
bride were sleeping, the witch went to the girl's room
and removed the magic ring from the girl's hand. As soon
as she did this, the true bride died

People in the woodcutter's neighborhood gathered
to hold a funeral and bury the dead girl. As they were
carrying the coffin to the cemetery, the corpse miraculously
old woman available for hire to undertake nefarious deeds
of various kinds. In this latest capacity, she may
simply be a shrewd, wily and unscrupulous accomplice in
covert action against someone.
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spoke to them, saying, "Write on my gravestone these words, 'Here lies Dilber,\(^5\) who could not have what she wished.'" The mourners fulfilled her request and then returned to their homes. Some time later the true bride gave birth to a child in the grave.

One day as the prince was returning from a hunting trip, he passed close to the cemetery where Dilber was buried. As he did so, he heard the crying of a baby ing forth from one of the graves. He asked himself, can there be a live baby in a grave?" He had no way of knowing that the baby was his own child, but he removed it carefully from the grave and took it to the palace. There he gave stern instructions to everyone to take good care of that baby and avoid, under any circumstances, causing the baby to cry. "Make sure that you give to this baby anything that it wants!"

One day the baby saw its mother's ring lying on a table. The baby began crying as it reached and reached for the ring. When it was given the ring, it stopped crying,

\(^5\)In some variants of this tale the heroine is named Dilber. It is ironic that it is only here, near the end of this tale, that the narrator finally remembered her name.
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but when the ring was taken away, it renewed its crying. The prince could not understand this situation, though he did not know, of course, that the ring had magical qualities. Finally the baby clasped the ring so tightly that the attendants could not pry it from the infant's tiny hand. Totally confused by its behavior, the prince finally decided to take the child back to the grave where he had found it. When they opened the grave again, the baby placed the ring on the finger of its mother. As a result, the true bride was immediately restored to life. She sat up and took the child in her arms.

The prince was almost overwhelmed with astonishment. "Allah, Allah!" he gasped. Then he asked, "What are you? Are you a jinn\(^6\) or some other supernatural creature?\(^7\)

\(^6\)The word jinn suggests two different kinds of supernatural creatures. The first is the huge otherworldly being who comes forth from a bottle or appears in response to some signal, such as the rubbing of a magic lamp or other object. This creature then proceeds to give the caller supernatural or magical aid to achieve what he/she wishes. The other kind of jinn is a spiritual force almost never seen. It is referred to in some Sufi beliefs and in other mystical systems.

\(^7\)If 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 Ínmişin cinmişin?--are you a jinn or other supernatural being? In some earlier interpretations of the word in, it seems to
"I am neither. I am a human being, like you," she answered. Then she climbed up out of the grave.

The prince took off his coat and wrapped it around her. As she walked toward his horse, grass sprang up from every place where she had stepped. Observing this, the prince said, "Aha! This is the woman I was supposed to marry!" He then placed Dilber and the child upon his horse and took them directly to the palace. When they arrived there, the confused prince asked, "Why is this happening, and what happened earlier?"

Dilber told him about this and that and other things. "The older woman here in the palace is my aunt. She was supposed to take me to marry you. Instead of doing that, she took my eyes and abandoned me on a mountain. She then presented her own daughter at the wedding celebration as your bride. I was rescued from the mountain by a kind woodcutter who recovered my eyes and made it possible for me to see again. He recovered my eyes by coming to the palace and exchanging two magic roses for them. When you have meant human being, and so the response then is, "I am a human being and not a jinn." But in most uses of this expression in ATON 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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smelled one of those roses, I immediately became pregnant with this child. So the baby is your child too.

After the prince had heard Dilber's whole account, he ordered one of the viziers to bring him a strong mule. After tying the aunt and the false bride to the tail of that mule, he whipped the mule sharply. It galloped away, dragging the two women to their deaths.

This story ends here after all of the principal characters had received what they deserved.