

# Kurdish Folktales

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Collected by:  
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<b>Date:</b>	Mon, 14 Feb 2005
<b>From:</b>	Mohamed H. Tofiq
<b>Subject:</b>	Permission
<b>To:</b>	Dr. Vera Saeedpour, The Kurdish Library, New York – USA "kurdishlib@aol.com"

Dear Dr. Vera Saeedpour

Warmest greetings

I would like to inform you that I intend to republish the English copy of "The Kurdish Folktales" here in Iraqi Kurdistan, the one that translated by professor Wheeler Thackston and published by The Kurdish Library in the International Journal of Kurdish Studies, Volume 13, Number 2, 1999.

please can you authorize us for that? If so, kindly send your authorization for this, with a soft copy of the book if possible, through the above email address. Looking forward for your answer.

Please be in touch.

With best regards

Yours,

Mohammed H. Tofiq

Sulaimaniya city

Iraqi Kurdistan

<b>From:</b>	Dr. Vera Saeedpour – The Kurdish Library, New York – USA "Kurdishlib@aol.com"
<b>Date:</b>	Tue, 22 Feb 2005
<b>Subject:</b>	Re: Permission
<b>To:</b>	Mohammed H. Tofiq – Suleimania – Iraqi Kurdistan

Dear Mohammed,

I was delighted to hear from you. Unfortunately I couldn't answer you sooner because I had to discuss the matter with Professor Thackston and the Board of the Kurdish Heritage Foundation, your wish to republish the lovely Kurdish folk tales.

They agreed, providing that you meet the following conditions:

1. You publish the entire issue of the journal, including the Editor's Note and the Introduction by Professor Thackston.
2. You insert this credit as follows: Reprinted from *The International Journal of Kurdish Studies* (Vol. 13, Number 2) 1999, with permission from the Kurdish Library in New York.

I haven't been able to find anyone to translate the village poetry. The translators are either too busy, too wealthy, or too incompetent to do poetry.

By the way, will you republish the folktales in Kurdish as well?

Be well,

Dr. Saeedpour

## **Editor's Note**

Coming at the end of the first millennium, this special issue of the journal features Kurdish folktales from the Sulaimani and Kerkuk regions of Iraqi Kurdistan. Painstakingly and lovingly collected by Mohammed Hamasalih Tofiq over a period of ten years, from ۱۹۸۰ to ۱۹۹۰, they came to us fortuitously. Mohammed H. Tofiq was among the more than ۶,۰۰۰ Iraqi Kurds brought to the United States under state Department auspices after the outbreak of renewed hostilities in Iraqi Kurdistan in ۱۹۹۶. He carried the stories with him in the hope that they might be published. But his sentiments for his homeland were so strong that some two years later, he decided to return. Shortly before he left, he contacted us and donated the collection to the Kurdish Library. We were delighted to consider them for publication. It remained only to get them translated into English. By another stroke of luck, we contacted Professor Wheeler Thackston of Harvard University, a member of our Board of Directors. He kindly offered to do the translation, completing the bulk of the collection in time for this issue.

For the past thirteen years the journal has published articles on history, culture and contemporary affairs. But there's something particularly rewarding about Kurdish literature - poetry, proverbs, folktales and the like - because they give us revealing glimpses of the people behind the history and politics. We can read these tales and find ourselves in them. What better indication that the Kurds are not as remote as the mileage would tend to indicate?

Dr. Vera Beaudin Saeedpour  
The Kurdish Library  
New York - USA

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## Kurdish Folklore

demons who come roaring down from the sky, irresistibly beautiful sprites and fairies, fire-breathing dragons, clever "mangy" kids, and treacherous viziers leering lustfully at helpless young princesses are the stuff of which Iranian folklore is made. Kurdish folk tales are no different from the generality of Iranian lore, and they contain the motifs and settings common to tales told by Persian speakers and the peoples of Luristan, Azerbaijan, Gilan, and Mazandaran. Although the vast majority of Kurds today live in parts of Iraq, Syria, and Turkey that are not normally associated with Iran, Kurdish is an Iranian language, and culturally the Kurds are much more akin to Persians than they are to Arabs or Turks. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the realm of folklore.

In this collection, one of the first to present to the English reader a range of Kurdish folktales, there are stories that revolve around clever youths of apparently humble origin who usually turn out to be sons of kings. Readers may be surprised to discover the story of Excalibur embedded in "The King Who Had Seven Sons", but the motif is a very old Indo-European one, as are most of the motifs in Iranian folklore and it is no wonder that it should have been retained among the Kurds. Also of great antiquity is the motif of Siyawush's trial by fire, and it appears in a slightly different guise in "Gulxhandaran's Flower". Akin to Siyawush's trial is the motif of the stepmother who tries to seduce her stepson and then, when rebuffed, accuses him of rape. Before the seventh century of our era, this motif had made its way into the Koranic version of the biblical story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, and it appears here in "King Ahmad" along with the resolution of the conflicting accounts of what happened (If your wife has ripped his clothing from behind, then it is her doing; if she has ripped his clothing from the front, then it is your son's doing, cf. Koran ۳:۳۶-۳۷).

A very familiar figure in Iranian folklore is Sultan Mahmud, who appears in "Strike, Strike" and the "The Weaver's Son". Historically he is the early eleventh-century Ghaznavid sultan who made extraordinary military incursion into India and is ultimately responsible for laying the ground for the widespread Islamicization of the subcontinent, but in folklore he appears, like Harun er-Rashid in the *Arabian Nights* and "The Black Slave", as a ruler who disguises himself as a dervish and goes out

into the city to see what his people are up to. In legend Sultan Mahmud is almost always accompanied by his favorite, Ayaz, and his vizier, Hasan Maymandi.

The "mangy" kid (*kurr a kachal*) who appears in so many Iranian tales is a stock character. His "mangy" epithet comes from a scalp disease common in the Middle East that results in the loss of most of the hair, but it leaves tufts of hair all over the scalp that are particularly unattractive. The "mangy" kid in stories invariably extremely clever, belying his appearance as a dim-witted member of the lowest classes of society.

The "merhorse" or sea-horse (*bahri*), is a wise, talking horse with magical powers that lives in the sea ("King Ahmad"). It becomes a valuable companion, advisor, and savior to its master.

This collection contains a number of stories featuring licentious women who "enjoy themselves" in secret with young men ("Uncle Homer, "The Weaver's Son"). There are also stories in which lascivious men force themselves upon unwilling but helpless young women ("The King and Fate"). The colorful Kurdish euphemism employed by the seducer, both male and female, is *damawe lagalim rek bikawi u dastim lagal tekal bikay* ("I want you to fall together with me and join hands with me"). Violated women are vindicated somehow and survive to "live happily ever after" in marriage, while the violating men are inevitably punished, usually with a horrible death, for their heinous acts.

Most of the tales are concerned, in one way or another, with justice, and usually - perhaps reflecting common experience over the centuries in Kurdistan - justice needs the intervention of some external (and often supernatural) agency to be done, like the skull that engenders a child in "The King of the East."

The stories given here in translation were collected from a variety of people from Kifri and the Sulaimani area of Iraqi Kurdistan and transcribed in Sorani Kurdish by Mohammed Hama-Salih Tofiq. The collection from which the translations were made is entitled *Chirok i bar Agirdan i Kurdawari (Stories from Kurdish Hearths)*, and it contains twenty-four stories of varying length, of which eighteen are given here in translation. The handwritten texts in Sorani Kurdish were provided by the Kurdish Library in Brooklyn, and I am confident that readers will enjoy them. It is hoped that the Kurdish texts will also be published soon.

W.M. Thackston  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

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# The King of the East

They say that a long time ago there was a merchant who had a daughter. The daughter was mad, and lest she harm anyone they locked her up in a room and gave her food and water through a window. Once the merchant packed up his goods and set out to trade in a distant country. He journeyed for a long time, and along the way he went and sat down by a stream to rest. He looked and saw something round floating down the stream. He pulled it out. It was a human head, of which only the bones remained. When he examined it closely, he saw that on the forehead was written: "Although I am dead, I will have an offspring, and he is fated to kill forty men." To himself the man said, "By God, I must hide this skull and not let the killing of those forty people come about."

Then he got up, crushed it to smithereens with a rock, put the remains in a bag, and took them away. When he had completed his business, he went back home and put the bag on a shelf. One day one of the children picked up the bag from shelf and took it to the mad daughter's window. The girl grabbed it and ate some of the contents. Immediately she was cured and called out to her mother, saying, "why am I in chains in this room? I am not ill, and there is nothing wrong with me."

They called a doctor, and he proclaimed her well. After a time the girl's belly began to swell, and it was obvious that she was pregnant. She was examined, but it turned out that she had not done anything bad except to have eaten some of the pulverized fragments from the bag. The father knew in his heart that something extraordinary was going to happen, and after nine months and nine days the girl gave birth to a boy. The child grew in such an extra ordinary fashion that when he was only five or six years old he had the intelligence and understanding of fully grown man.

The merchant also had a son who worked as a farmer. One day there was no one to take him his noon meal, and the child said, "I'll take it." Although they told him he was only a child and couldn't do it, it was of no use. When he took the food to his uncle and they sat down together to rest, they saw a man carrying a burden on his back and headed toward them. "Uncle," the boy said, "that man who is coming toward us is going to the judge in order to have a dream interpreted. He had a dream last night, and in his dream a ray of daylight from the skylight fell onto their hearth. The judge will interpret it to mean that there is a jar of money under the hearth. When

the judge is interpreting the dream he will try to play a trick and say, Was it our hearth? (Meaning the judge's). If the man says yes, by virtue of that word the jar of money will go under the hearth in the judge's house, and they will get it for themselves. I'm going to call him because that's not how it is supposed to be."

Uncle, the boy cried out, didn't you have a dream last night? Yes, I did, the man said. In your dream did a ray of light come through the skylight in your house and fall on your hearth? The boy asked. The man was astonished and said, yes, that is how it was. How did you know? Uncle, said the boy, come, let me explain it to you. Your dream indicates that there is a treasure under your hearth. During the interpretation if the judge asks you if it was his hearth, say, No, it was our own hearth. Otherwise the jar of money will go under his hearth.

The man thanked him with skepticism and went to the judge. When he got there he put down his sack of gifts and told the judge why he had come. Exactly as the boy had said, the judge asked him, was it our hearth? However, he said, No, your honor, it was our own hearth. The judge repeated his question again, but the man did not change his initial response, from whom did you learn this? The judge asked, and the man told him about the boy. Go on your way, said the judge, for you have your treasure. Then the judge sent two men to the farmer. Before they went he said, He has a boy with him who is a seer and knows hidden things. Go, buy him from the farmer, and no matter how much he asks, give it to him. Then kill the boy. I'll give you a sufficient reward.

The men went to the farmer and explained to him what they wanted. He was confounded and said, He is my nephew. How can I do such a thing? The boy called to his uncle and said, Uncle, I am not your son, and I do not belong to you. Agree to sell me on condition that they give you my weight in money. One way or another, the uncle had to agree on condition that they give him the boy's weight in money. They went off to the judge and got a lot of money with which they satisfied the man's demand. They got the boy, but first he filled a sack with the money paid for him, gave the remainder to his uncle, and said good-bye. Along the way, when the men were about to kill him, he said to them, I'll give you this sack of money, which is several times your hire. If you go to the judge and say you've killed me will fall on your necks! Let me go, and I promise you I'll leave this country, and you can tell the judge you've killed me. The judge's men liked what the child said to them, so they took the money and set him free.

The boy went his own way through several cities and several countries until he reached the edge of a body of water. He looked and saw an old man who was busy fishing. He went up to him, greeted him, and said, "Uncle, this is not your job. Why don't you go home and rest? Why do you bother with the headache of such a task?" "What can I do, my son?" The old man said. "I have on child or anybody else to make a living for me. I have no choice but to work hard in order for us to live." "Uncle," said the boy, "I am a child who has nobody and nothing - neither father nor mother. I'd like you make me your son."

This was just what the old man had been wanting, so he was very happy. He took the child home with him, and his wife was also very happy with him. The boy began

interpreting dreams, telling fortunes, and doing that sort of thing and he made so much money that they became rich, and the old man and woman flourished. However, the old man stuck to his old habits and went out fishing every day. The boy kept saying, "Father, it is a shame with us being so rich. Give it up!" But it was of no use.

One day he threw out his hook, and when he drew it in, there was a beautiful white fish on it. "By God," said the old man, "this fish would be good for the king's daughter. It is so beautiful she could keep it." Putting the white fish in a pot of water, he took it to the king's daughter. Instead of thanking him and expressing her gratitude, she said quite frankly, "This fish is male, and it can't stay near me because it would be against religion for me to look at it." With these words the fish began to guffaw. The girl got angry with the old man and him arrested and put in prison. Night fell, and when the old man didn't come home, the old woman said, "There are a thousand dangers he could have fallen into." However, the boy told her that the king's daughter had detained him.

Early the next morning the boy took himself to the king's daughter and begged her to release his father, but the girl said, "I won't release him until you tell me why that fish laughed at me." "It would be better for me not to tell you," the boy replied. And he had an exchange of strong words with the king's daughter. Then the sergeants-at-arms came and took him before the king. When the king asked why he had come, the boy said angrily, "Your daughter had my father arrested. Now you give an order for his release. If you don't, I'll do to you what was done to the king of the east."

"Now, my small son," said the king, "tell me that the king of the east was and what happened to him. Tell me the story." "Your Majesty," said the small boy, "the king of the east was a king of great might and power. He had a wife who was without equal for her knowledge and cleverness, and she was called Long-Tress. The king loved his wife very much. The king also had a parrot he kept in a cage.

"Early one morning the king got up and saw another parrot sitting on the cage, and the two parrots were chirping together. After a while the second parrot flapped its wings and flew away. The king's parrot curled up and burst into tears. 'Parrot,' asked the king of the east, 'who was that who came to you?'

"That was my brother,' the parrot said. 'He invited me to his wedding, but I, as you can see, am a prisoner in this cage. I began crying out of sadness.'

"The king was quite moved and said, 'Parrot, if I let you go to your people, will you promise you'll return to me?' Swearing he would return, the parrot flapped his wings and flew away to his own country, where he attended his brother's wedding. Then he asked his father for permission to leave. His father gave him an apple sapling and said, 'Anyone who plants this apple sapling in a pure state and waters it while in a pure state will get an apple, and anyone who eats it, no matter if he is eighty or ninety years old, will turn into a fourteen-year-old boy.'

"Early one morning the king woke up, looked, and saw that the parrot had returned to his cage. The king rejoiced and welcomed the parrot back. The parrot in turn gave him the apple sapling, saying, 'My king, this is a gift from my father to you. Plant it thus and so in order for it to bear fruit.'

"A few years passed, and the tree bore fruit. One night a violent wind storm knocked an apple from the tree, and just then a poisonous snake found it and bit into it. The next morning that very apple was taken to the king, who said, 'Now, Long-Tress, divide it into two, and each of us will eat a piece to see whether the parrot is telling the truth that we'll be young again.'

"The king had a very wise and clever vizier who said, 'Long live the king. First let's give a bit of it to an animal lest parrot has plotted against us.' The vizier's opinion suited the king, and a little of the apple was given to a sheep, which immediately dropped dead. The king ordered the parrot's head cut off. Then his suspicions landed on his wife Long-Tress's head as he said to himself, 'One way or another, she has had a hand in this plot.' And he gave an order for her to be killed too.

"There was an old man in the king's city. He had young women to serve him, but he always found fault with them and in the end sent them away. Finally the old man got sick of living and decided to go eat some of the apple in the king's house and rid himself of his headache. When he ate the apple he immediately gave a shiver and became a fourteen-year-old boy. This became the talk of the town at the news spread far and wide. When the king heard about it, he realized that the first apple had been bitten by a snake, and in his grief and regret he turned into a wild boar, upon which the dogs were set and tore it to pieces.

"Now, king," said the boy, "I swear by God that if you don't release my father, I'll do to you as was done to the king of the east." The king laughed and said, "Small boy, your stories are nice. Come tell us another." "King," he said, "I am not a story teller. For the last time I'm telling you that if you don't let my father go, by God I'll do to you as was done to the hunter."

"Tell me what happened to the hunter," said the king.

"Your majesty," he said, "once there was a hunter. He had a very clever hawk with which he hunted. This hawk would grab any prey upon which it was set and not let go. On account of this hawk the hunter never returned empty-handed and for this reason he loved his hawk more than anything. One day in a parched and waterless desert, the water in his water bag spilled, and he got so thirsty he almost went blind. After much searching for water, he chanced upon a waterfall and a pool. He looked and saw that yellowish water was dripping drop by drop. As he was about to go blind from thirst, it was hard for him to cup his hand, and it took him a long time to get a handful of water. He was just about to take it to his mouth when the falcon flapped its wings against him and made him spill the water.

"The man was very angry with the falcon, and when he filled his hand with water again, the falcon made him spill it just as it had done before. This time the man had had enough, so he grabbed the falcon and wrung its neck. Then he stepped back not far from the pool and looked. What he saw was a dragon lying there and wouldn't you know it? – the water wasn't water; it was the dragon's poison dripping into the pool. In a fit of regret the man sprouted two great horns and turned into a mountain ram. A hunter set his dogs on him, and they killed him.

"Yes, your majesty, by God I'll do to you just as that hunter did if you don't let my father go. The king sent for his daughter and asked her, "Daughter, why did you have this man arrested?"

"Father dear," she replied, "this man brought me a fish that laughed at me. That's why I had him arrested. And I told him that unless he told me why the fish was laughing I wouldn't let him go." The young boy said, "Your majesty, I'll tell her, but on condition that she must do whatever I say and not refuse me."

The boy went through all the rooms in the palace, and in the daughter's room he discovered a secret door leading underground. He asked the girl for the key. The girl turned pale and said, "I've lost it." However, her father forced her to produce it, and they opened the door and looked in. There were thirty-nine huge men inside. The small boy said, "Your majesty, your daughter enjoys herself every night with these men but she tells my father that if the fish is male she can't look at it!" On the spot the king put a sword into the boy's hand and said, "Cut all thirty-nine of them into ribbons." He cut off all their heads and then, at the king's command, he killed the girl.

In this way the forty murders that were foretold on the forehead of the skull came true. The boy was well rewarded by the king, and he returned to his old grand mother, they lived happily ever after.

## The Cleverness of the Three Brothers

They say that long ago there was a man. He was very hard working, and as a result of saving his money and his miserliness, he became very rich. This man had three sons. When he had grown old and was afraid he was going to die, he called his sons and advised them never to give up working for a living and not to be content with the wealth they had, since on matter how rich a man may be, if he doesn't work, his money will come to an end.

Then the father divided his money into two parts. One part he left for his sons to live on after his death. The other part he put into three bags, and then he went to cave, where he dug a hole and hid the bags. He informed his sons that in case some day they had nothing left and was in need, they could go and get the money from the mountain cave. After a while the father died. The sons, heedless of his advice, began enjoying themselves, and within a few years they had spent all the money and wealth there was, and they had nothing left and were penniless. During the time they were squandering the money the never thought of the portion of the wealth their father had hidden for them. When nothing was left, they still didn't remember. Day by day their friends and relatives avoided them more and more until there was nothing left for them to do but look for work. One of them became a porter, and the other two became a helper in a teahouse and an apprentice mender. The youngest brother, who worked as a porter in the market, wandered about one day from morning till evening, but he couldn't find any work. That night he went in distress and fatigue to a bench in front of a house, sat down, and lost himself in deep thought of how he and his brothers had forgotten their father's advice and what had happened to them as a consequence. Suddenly he remembered the three bags of money their father had hidden in the cave. Immediately he jumped up and went to the cave. Digging in the ground, he looked and saw all three bags still in their places. He took one bag and put the other two back, covering them well. Then, just as before, the boy squandered the money and spent it all in a short time. Then he went to his brothers and told them about the forgotten three bags of money. They were so happy their feet scarcely touched the ground as they went to the cave.

When they got the money out and looked, they saw that there were only two bags left. They began quarreling among themselves and saying, "This is not the work of a stranger. One way or another, one of us has done it." They blamed each other and fought, but they got nowhere.

Then they set out to go to the judge. Along the way an Arab asked them if they had seen his camel thereabouts. The eldest brother asked, "Your camel is blind in one eye, isn't it?" "That's right," said the man. "It is blind in one eye."

The middle brother asked, "Your camel has a broken tooth, doesn't it?" The man nodded his head and answered, "Yes, it does."

The youngest brother asked, "Your camel is carrying a load of wheat on one side and a load of molasses on the other, isn't it?"

The man replied gleefully, "That's right. It is. Where is my camel?"

You must know where it is." The brothers answered, "Brother, we haven't seen your camel hereabouts."

The man didn't believe them, "How did you know my camel had one blind eye and was missing a tooth and was carrying wheat and molasses if you don't know where it is? One way or another, you have stolen it!" No matter how hard the brothers assured him and tried to placate him, it was useless. The man followed them to the judge's house, and there he lodged a complaint.

The judge asked the brothers, "How did you know all about the camel?" The eldest brother replied, "Your honor, along the way I looked closely at the camel's tracks, and only on one side of the road had it eaten any plants. It had left the other side alone. I therefore concluded that the camel had one blind eye."

The middle brother said, "Your honor, when I looked closely at the camel's tracks, I saw that of every bite it had taken something was left. I therefore concluded that the camel had a broken tooth."

The youngest brother said, "Your honor, when I looked at one certain place, I saw that a camel had lain down. I saw that on one side there were flies while on the other there were ants. It was therefore clear to me that one side of the load was molasses and the other side was grain."

The judge was astonished by the three brothers' cleverness. He persuaded the owner of the camel that the brothers knew the camel's description only through their intelligence. And so the man went away with his hopes unfulfilled.

Then the brothers lodged their own complaints to the judge, telling him that two of the three bags of money were there and that they suspected one of themselves because if it had been a stranger he would have taken all three. The judge said, "Just now it is noon. Come, let's eat, and then I'll give you a verdict."

The judge's room was large and divided by a curtain. The judge placed his guests on one side of the curtain while he sat on the other. When it was time for the noon meal, a tray of food was brought in, but the brothers refused to eat anything. The middle and youngest brothers said to the eldest, "Brother, please take something."

"By God," he said, "This wheat bread is haram, and I don't eat haram."

The middle brother said, "That is so, but I also see that the meat is dog meat and therefore haram."

The youngest brother said, "By God, not only is the judge's bread haram and his meat is dog meat, but he himself is a bastard and not his father's son."

The judge on the other side of the curtain was taken aback by these words, so he came around to where they were and asked, "Why aren't you eating your food?"

"In the first place," they said, "the bread is haram; the meat you think is lamb is dog meat; and the third reason is something we can't say."

The judge went around to the other side, picked up an orange and a lemon, and went back to them. "If you can tell me what these two things are I'm holding in my hand," he said, "then I will accept what you say."

"It is around like a ball," said one.

"It is bitter like yogurt," said the second.

"It is either an orange or a lemon," said the third.

The judge went back to the other side of the curtain and threw down the orange and lemon in frustration. Then he summoned his farmer and said, "I want to know why this bread of mine is haram."

"It has all been produced by the sweat of my brow," the man said, but the judge insisted that he tell him the truth. The man had to confess, saying, "By God, I planted the wheat in an old graveyard after I had cleared away the bones and bits and pieces of the dead and hidden them in a pit."

Thus the judge understood that what the brothers had said was right. Next he called his shepherd and said, "Come, tell me why the meat of this lamb you slaughtered is haram. My guests will not eat it, and they say it is haram and doge meat. If you don't tell me the truth right now, I'll fire you!"

The shepherd had to say, "Why hide it from you? When this lamb was born its mother died, so I took it to the bitch dog of the flock to suckle it. The bitch suckled it until it was weaned."

When the judge heard this, he was astonished and said, "It's clear that the other thing must be true too." He got up and went to his mother, saying, "Mother, tell me the truth. Whose son am I?" As though she had been struck by thunder, his mother said, "Son, have you gone mad? What are these vile accusations you are making? Why shouldn't you be your father's son?"

"I don't know anything about it," the judge replied. "If you don't tell me the truth right now, I'll throttle you. This is what my guests say, and everything they have said about our bread and meat being haram has turned out to be true. Tell me and don't try to get out of it. I'm certainly not going to divulge the secret to anybody."

His mother turned away from him and said, "By God, son, why should I hide it from you? Your father couldn't have children. One night a dervish was our guest, and you are his son."

The judge returned to the brothers. They stood before him and said, "please, give us a verdict so that we can be on our way." "Listen," said the judge. "I'm going to tell you a story. When it is finished I'll give you a verdict."

"They say that once upon a time in a village there was a boy and a girl. They loved each other very much. Every night the girl used to slip away and go to the boy, who slept on the roof. There they would tell each other their secrets for a while, and then

the girl would return home. One night while they were talking to each other the girl and boy fell asleep, and they didn't wake up until morning. By that time the villagers had seen them a sleep together on the roof, and of course the gossip spread through the village. The household of the girl's father found out about it, and they wanted to kill her, but their relatives wouldn't let them, saying, 'She has, brought shame and disgrace on us, but let's find away to get rid of her.'

Every day they gave her a water sack to go fill with water from the spring high on the mountain behind the village, in hopes that she would fall off the mountain and die and thus rid them of her disgrace. One day her beloved followed her and said, 'Come, let's run away together to a place where no one knows us. Several times I have sent to ask for you in marriage, but the members of your father's household are being spiteful and won't let me have you.' The girl replied, 'No, I won't do it because it would be more disgraceful than what we did that night. However, I promise you that if I live and my father marries me off, the night I am taken as a bride to my husband's house I'll come to you and we can go away together.'

"After several years the affair grew stale, they hadn't killed the girl, and everybody had forgotten about it. Another boy in the village asked to marry her and was accepted. On the night she went to her fiancé, the girl said to him, 'Let me go to the spring. I'll come back.' The husband refused and said, 'How can you do such a thing in the middle of the night? If you insist on going, at least let me come with you.' His words had no effect.

"The girl set off by herself, and with that excuse she went to her beloved.

Along the way she encountered a thief who said, 'Take off all that finery you are wearing. My wife and children have been about to starve for a week.'

"The girl pleaded with him and explained her promise to her beloved, saying, 'it would be shameful for me to go to him disheveled. I promise you that when I come away from him I won't go home but I'll come to you.' The thief agreed, and the girl went to her beloved. The youth was astonished by her truthfulness and said, 'Now you are married and I look upon you as a sister. Go back to your husband.' The girl left, but she didn't go home.

She kept her promise and went to the thief, to whom she explained the situation with her beloved. The thief said, 'Why should he be more chivalrous than me? By God, even if my wife and children are without food for another week, I won't touch your finery. Go home!'

When the judge finished his story, the eldest brother said, "By God, the youth was a real man." The middle brother said, "I think the thief was very honorable and chivalrous. Even though his children were hungry he didn't take anything from the girl."

The youngest brother, however, said, "Damn that thief! If it had been me, I would have taken all the girl's finery and jewelry, and then I would have taken her."

No sooner were these words out of the youngest brother's mouth than the judge grabbed his arm and said, "This is one who took the bag of money, and this is my verdict." The youth had to confess that he had taken the money, and the judge gave the two bags of money to the eldest and middle brothers.

## The Black Slave

They say that in the days when Harun er-Rashid was caliph, there was a couple in Baghdad. They loved each other very much, and they had several children. It happened that the wife came down with a serious illness. One day she went to the doctor, who said, "Although you have a very serious illness, the remedy is simple."

"I beg you," she said, "tell me what's to be done."

"The remedy is for you to eat pomegranates," the doctor said.

It was not the season for pomegranates. That evening, when her husband came home, the woman told him about their doctor's prescription, saying, "If you really love me, you must find me some pomegranates, wherever they may be, so that I can get well."

"Of course," the man said, "I won't even wait for tomorrow morning to hide the road." Thus the man set out wandering from country to country and city to city until he came to a far-away country where he found several pomegranates, and then he returned. His wife ate two or three of them, and her illness disappeared.

One day their children were playing by the door with two of the pomegranates. Just then a black slave passed by and was amazed at the sight of the pomegranates in the children's hands, especially since it wasn't the season for pomegranates.

"Where did these pomegranates come from?" He asked the children.

"Our mother was sick," they said, "and our father found them in a faraway country."

The man tricked the children and took the pomegranates from them. Off he went, but along the way he chanced upon the woman's husband, who was quite surprised and said to himself, "Only I have pomegranates in this city. How did they come to be in the black slave's possession? Therefore he called out to the slave and asked, where did these pomegranates come from?"

"The tale of these pomegranates is long and involved and shouldn't be told." The husband kept repeating his question and wouldn't let him go. In the end the slave said, "These pomegranates are gifts from the woman who is my lover. We have been

lovers for about a year. During this time I said to her, 'if you really love me, trick your husband into going far from this city so that we can enjoy each other more easily.' The woman pretended to be ill for a while, and then she lied to her husband, saying, 'The doctor has told me that if don't eat pomegranates, I won't get well.' In this way she got her husband away for a long time, and we stayed here enjoying ourselves immensely."

The slave told this whopping lie and left. The man's heart immediately turned sour toward his wife on account of the slave's story, and when he went home he was so sick with grief that he couldn't eat or sleep. "Why should I kill her?" He said to himself. "I'll go tell her father." The next morning he got up and went to his wife's father and told him the story.

The father hit the ceiling and immediately sent for his daughter, to whom he explained the situation. No matter how she tried to calm him down and swore she was innocent, it was useless. The father, refusing to listen to reason, stabbed his daughter with a dagger. That night he put her body in a sack and threw it into the river. By God's command that night it was cold, windy, and stormy.

Harun er-Rashid's house and his vizier's house were by the river and next to each other. That night Harun er-Rashid stuck his head outside, and he asked his vizier, "Would you say? There is anybody who could go outside this night?"

"My lord," the vizier replied, "I don't believe anybody could." Just then the two of them saw the glimmer of a fire being lit in the lower part of the city.

"Vizier," the caliph said, "wrap yourself up and let's go." Together they went toward the light, and when they reached it they saw a fisherman fishing. "Are you crazy?" They asked. "Who could come out on such a night?"

"And what am I to do?" He said. "I have a wife and many children. If I don't do this, I won't be able to make a living for them." Just then he threw his net into the water. "This one is for your luck," he said. When he pulled the net in, it was very heavy. They all looked and saw a with blood dripping from it. They looked in it and saw a woman. They hoisted her onto the fisherman's back and took her to the caliph's house.

That very night Harun er-Rashid ordered a physician summoned, and when he examined the woman, he said, "My lord, she is still alive. Bring me a lot of milk."

The physician treated her wounds, and it didn't take long before all her wounds healed. Then she opened her eyes and began to speak. When they asked her what had happened, the woman told them everything about how the slave had caused it by telling a slanderous lie about her. Then she told the caliph the address of her father's and husband's houses, and of them were brought before the caliph. They tried to persuade him that it was a matter of honor and they couldn't ignore it because the pomegranates had been seen in the slave's hand, and the slave had told the husband the story he had told.

The caliph ordered them both put in prison, and then he turned to his viziers and advisors and said, "I swear by that God who made me caliph of all Moslems that if within a month you don't find this black slave for me, I'll remove all of you from

office and throw you in prison! God and do nothing during the coming month but look for that slave!"

The wife of one of the viziers asked her husband, "Why are you so down and out?"

"Why shouldn't I be?" He said. "Some pomegranates have been stolen from the caliph, and he is threatening to fire us from office if we don't find out within a month where the pomegranates are."

"Not long ago," the wife said, "Our own slave brought two pomegranates, and when we asked him where he got them, he said he got them from two children. Then we ate them."

"Woman," said the vizier as he sighed, "I myself have been looking for that slave for a long time."

When the slave came, the vizier immediately ordered him to be bound hand and foot, and he was taken before the caliph.

In the caliph's presence, together with the slave, appeared the woman's father and husband. The caliph asked, "All right, slave, where did you get these pomegranates?"

The slave replied, "My lord, I was passing by a house when I looked and saw two children playing with two pomegranates. I was amazed because it wasn't the season for pomegranates. I went over to them and asked where they had gotten the pomegranates. They told me, 'Our mother has been ill and the doctor told her she had to eat pomegranates and then she would get well. Our father went to a distant country and brought back several pomegranates.' I tricked the children out of the pomegranates, and a long the way I encountered this man (as he pointed out the woman's husband), and when he asked me about the pomegranates, I made up a lie in line with that the children had told me, and I said to him, 'They are from the woman who is my lover. She pretended to be sick and while she sent her husband to a distant country to find pomegranates, we enjoyed ourselves.' When I finished my story I left the man. After that I don't know what happened."

Right then and there the caliph ordered that the slave be taken to the gallows and that the girl's father be imprisoned for fifteen years because he had wanted to kill his daughter without investigation or ascertaining the facts. The husband he pardoned because he revealed the affair of the father and daughter. Then, at the request of the woman and her husband, he reduced the father's sentence to five years in prison.

## Gulkhandaran's Flower

It is related that a long, long time ago there was a king. For some reason or other, he decided that if he had a son he would cut his head off and only allow daughters to survive him.

One year occurred to the king to go on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and his wife was pregnant "I'm going on the pilgrimage," he said to his vizier. "you know that the way is far, and it may take me several year. If my wife give s birth to daughter, let her live; but if it is son, he will have to be killed in accordance with the command I have given."

"My king," said the vizier, "your order will be obeyed." The king and his entourage set out for the pilgrimage, and after nine months and nine days the king's wife gave birth to a son. The woman pleaded hard with the vizier, saying, "Do not carry out the king's order, for the child is innocent." This vizier was glad to grant her request, and so it was decided that the child is should live.

Several years passed. The child grew, and since he was well looked after, he appeared older than he was. After four or five years the king returned from the pilgrimage, and the people of the city, men, women, old and young alike, turned out to greet him. In the midst of the people the king's wife and son were conspicuous. "Who is that child in the midst of my family?" the king asked the vizier. "Never in my life have I seen such a beautiful child."

"Your majesty, how can I conceal it from you?" replied the vizier. "That is your son. When he was born, I wanted to carry out your order, but your wife pleaded, and I was moved by pity and could not bring myself to kill the child."

When the king heard this, his eyes bulged in anger and the hair on his body stood on end. "How dare you not carry out my order? Now you will have to go cut off the heads of both the child and its mother."

The vizier immediately went to the king's wife and told her what had happened. As soon as the king's wife heard this, she got up, mounted a horse with the child behind

her, and departed in haste. For a long time they traveled until they came to the base of a mountain. There they dismounted, and after resting a while, they gathered some fruit from bushes and trees because they had no opportunity to bring food or supplies with them. By chance the mother found a jewel. It shone like a lamp, so she picked it up and said to her self, "This will come in handy in the future."

Then they mounted and traveled for several nights and several days until they came to a city, and there they rented a house outside of town. Every day the boy went out to hunt, returning with a lot of prey. They passed several months in this manner, but what money and gold the mother had was all spent.

One day the boy came back from hunting and said, "Mother, what do we have?"

"My son," said the mother, "all the money we had is gone. Only this jewel remains. Take it to the market, and maybe you can sell it for a pittance. However much you get, I'm afraid you'll get into trouble over it."

The boy took the jewel to the lane of the goldsmiths, and there many people gathered around him and started negotiating and haggling with him. A jewel merchant examined it carefully, and he realized that it was a jewel too valuable to buy.

"How much will you sell this jewel for?" he asked the boy.

"I don't know anything about the price of jewels," said the boy. "I'll sell it for however much you give me."

"I'll give you ten thousand liras," said the merchant.

The boy was flabbergasted and said, "Sir, it's obvious you're playing a joke on me."

"My son," he said, "why should I play a joke on you? The jewel is valuable." He gave him the ten thousand liras, and in shock the boy took the money to his mother. Then the man said to himself, "By God, the only good for him."

Immediately he went to the king's court and said, "Your majesty, I bought this rare jewel from a stranger today, and I realized that the only use it has is as present to you."

The king thanked him very much, and he and his vizier and grandees examined it. Each one on his part praised it greatly. One of the king's vizier who was bad-tempered and never spoke well of any body examined the jewel, and his displeasure was obvious from his expression.

"What do you think of this jewel?" asked the king.

"Your majesty," he replied, "it is very beautiful, but wouldn't it be nice if another one should come to hand and both were placed opposite each other in a niche. Then their beauty and dazzling qualities could never be disputed."

The king got the point and said to the merchant, "You must find another such stone for me."

"Your majesty," he said, "how can I find another jewel like this one? I don't know that strange boy, and his people were not around." But no matter how he objected, the king insisted, saying, "I won't listen to anything you say, and it's no use to refuse. If you don't find any one, I'll have your head cut off."

"Your majesty," said the vizier, "in order to find the boy, you should have it

heralded throughout town that every male in the city should come before the herald. Then this man can go through them until he identifies the boy."

So a royal proclamation was made in the lanes and streets of the city, and anyone who did not obey would suffer the worst punishment. When the mother learned of this, she turned to her son and said, "Son, I know they are looking for you, and this has something to do with that jewel. What can we do? You'll have to go, and God be with you."

When the boy went to the king's court, the merchant recognized him straight-away, but they were not called until the king's meal was over and they were summoned into the king's presence.

"My son," asked the king, "is this jewel yours?"

"Yes, your majesty," he said

"Very well. Can't you find another stone like it for us?"

"No, your majesty," he said. "When I was a child and my mother left her country, the only thing we brought with us was this jewel."

"Now, my son, if you don't find another stone like this one for us, I will send you away from this country," said the king.

"Long live the king," said the boy. "Until now we have lived in your country, and we are very grateful to you, but if you aren't content for us to stay, we'll leave here and go to another country,"

"No," said the king, "I won't let you go, and if you don't find another jewel I'll have your head cut off."

The boy thought for a moment or two and then said to the king, "Your majesty, give me forty days. Maybe I can find one for you."

"Very well," said the king

But the vizier interrupted and said, "Your majesty, how can you give me this boy such a long period of time? During this period he could run away to another country and no body would ever find him again. You should find someone to guarantee his return."

The king nodded at the vizier in agreement, but no one could be found in the city to give a guarantee for the boy. The merchant was then forced to agree to guarantee that if the boy didn't come back, his head would be forfeited.

The boy went back to his mother and told her what had happened. "My son," she said, "back when we were coming to this city, we came to a certain place next to a mountain, and that is where I found the jewel. Go, and God be with you. Maybe you will achieve your goal."

The boy took his sword and arrows, mounted his horse, and departed. How far he traveled God only knows, but he came to the foot of the same mountain he had come to as a child with his mother, where they had found the jewel. He went up a way on the mountain. How beautiful it was! Under every rock he turned over there were jewels by the tens and threes. Astonished, he said to himself, "I can't return until I have accomplished my task, even if I lose my head in the process."

Then, he dug a pit waist deep under a rock, covered his head with leaves and brush, and sat down waiting to see what would happen. A little time passed. He

looked and saw a bird and smoke covering the sky, and with an incredibly loud roar it come down. He looked and saw that it was a demon.

Then demon went to the base of a boulder and looked at it. The body of an ifrit was caught in it. The demon pulled a stick out of the body, and the ifrit stood up and began to flirt with the demon. Every time the ifrit smiled, a jewel fell from her mouth. After a time the demon stuck a stick into ifrit, and she fell down asleep. The demon turned back into a bird and smoke and went up into the sky.

Then the boy went to the ifrit and looked at her. The stick had been placed in her side. He took hold of it and pulled it out. Then ifrit woke up and started crying. Perplexed, the boy said, "This is strange. You laughed and joked with a gruff old demon, but with me you cry. I am a human and like you, for we are both of flesh and blood."

"I'm crying for you," said the ifrit. "When the demon comes back he'll tear you to shreds. Until now no human has ever found his way here. How were you able to get to this place?"

"Why shouldn't I be able to kill the demon?" said the boy. "If you help me, I'll get rid of him,"

"If you rescue me, I'm ready to help you how ever I can," said the ifrit.

"That would be good," he said. "I'll make a plan for you, and together we'll be able to overwhelm the demon,'

"Whatever plan you make for me," said the girl, "I'm ready to carry it out."

"When the demon came back and puts the talisman on your head to wake you up, instead of joking and laughing with him you should burst into tears and go limp so that he will ask you why you are acting like that. Tell him to take the talisman from you and let you sleep so that you won't see all these mountains and tree. Tell him you don't like them, and that's why you are crying."

So, when the demon came back, the ifrit went limp and, playing her role to perfection, convinced the demon.

The next morning, when the demon went a way, he went to the ifrit and said, "Now, when he comes back, start crying just as you did that last time. He will ask why you are crying and why you are so sad .you say 'Why shouldn't I be? You always leave me a lone, and there is no one for me to talk to. I have heard that demons have a familiar. You should leave your familiar with me so I won't be lonely.' "

The next day, when the demon came to the girl roaring and screaming, she began to cry and tell the demon just what she had been told to say. The demon answered, saying, "I know some damnable, bastard human being has come to this region and seduced you." "Could anybody reach this place and escape the demons' spells?" asked the girl.

The demon had to agree, but when he went a way he left his familiar with the girl. The boy emerged from his hole, attacking the familiar with his sword and cutting it to ribbons. At once the demon fell from the sky and was smashed to smithereens.

The boy then put the girl behind him on his horse, and after several days and night of travels they reached his mother. There he married the girl.

Every time his wife laughed, a jewel fell from her mouth. The boy gathered ten or

twelve jewels and took them to the king's court and distributed every one on them to the king's viziers and grandees. However, the evil vizier wasn't there.

When all the jewels had been given away, the vizier came in and said,

"Where is my share?"

"You weren't here, and there are none left for you," said the boy.

"By God," said the vizier, "I should stick a nail in one side of your foot and pound it flat on the other! It's obvious you left me none on purpose."

"Go and don't undervalue what you get," said the boy.

Then the boy went home, and the vizier went in secret and spied on the boy's house. Inside the house he saw an ifrit, and every time she laughed a jewel fell from her mouth, and she was so beautiful nothing could come close to describing her.

The vizier said nothing and went back to the king, beating his head with both hands. The king was surprised and said, "Vizier, what's wrong with you? What has happened to you?"

"My king," he said, "you sent that boy to get a jewel, but he has brought back the producer of the jewel. Every time she laughs a jewel falls from her mouth. If things go on like this, that boy will have great wealth. He will dislodge you, and in the end he will usurp your royal throne and crown."

"What can we do?" asked the king.

"Here's what we should do," said the vizier. "Let's get rid of this boy, and then you can marry his wife yourself."

"That's a good idea," said the king. "How can we bump him off?"

"Your majesty," replied the vizier, "you pretend to be ill. Summon the boy and tell him that all the physicians and astrologers have come and told you the only things that will make you well is Gulkhandaran's rose. Gulkhandaran's rose is in a very distant place totally protected by demon spells. No one can get to it. Tell him we have never been able to reach it. Send him, and he won't ever return. Then we can do as we please."

The king liked this plan of his vizier. At once he pretended to be ill and send for the boy, to whom he explained the matter of Gulkhandaran's rose. Then he persuaded him to go and get it for him, even if he had to get it out from under the earth. No matter how much the boy objected. Saying, "I don't know where to go or how to find it," nothing he could say or do did any good, and the king's command could not be refused. Then the merchant was brought and forced to guarantee that the boy would return, and if he didn't, he would forfeit his head.

Returning to his mother and wife in sorrow, he told them what had happened. "That's nothing," his wife said. "Gulkhandaran is my cousin, and breaking demon spells is easy for me. Here's the ring the demon put on my hand so he would recognize me. I'll show you how to recognize her. Go to such-and-such a place, where you'll find thorns and brambles. Recite the spell I tell you and say, 'my goodness, what a beautiful garden and what beautiful flowers!'

"The whole place will turn into a garden full of flowers and you'll be able to walk through without harm, you'll encounter a place full of ferocious beasts like lion and tiger. Recite the spell and say, 'Oh, how nice and tame they are!' Once you say this,

they won't harm you.

"Then go until you come to Gulkhandaran's cave. She'll be inside. When you get here, a serving girl six or seven years old will come out. At once throw this ring into the cup of water she will have brought out. Then Gulkhandaran will come to you. She, like me, was carried off by a demon and put under his spell. Rescue her as you did me, and bring her here."

The boy picked up his sword and arrows, mounted his horse, and left. How far he went only God knows, but he reached the valley his wife had described.

He recited the spell and started through safely. He kept going for a while and, just as his wife had told him, he escaped from the ferocious animals. He got through several other spells, and then he came to the mountain and cave in which Gulkhandaran was imprisoned. There he waited until the serving girl came out and welcomed the boy.

"How were you able to get here?" she asked.

He explained everything to her in detail and told her of her cousin's plan.

"I want to rescue you too," he said. Gulkhandaran took him inside, hid him somewhere, gave him a sword, and said, "When the demon puts his head on my lap and goes to sleep, only then will you be able to overwhelm him and kill him. Otherwise, if he discovers you, he'll rip you to shreds."

In this manner, when the demon came back in the evening, after he had joked and played with the girl he went to sleep with his head on her lap. At that moment the boy pulled out his sword and cut the demon's head off. At that instant the serving girl disappeared. Then Gulkhandaran packed up her belongings and went with the boy to her cousin. They rejoiced at the sight of each other, and the boy married her too. Every time Gulkhandaran laughed, a flower fell from her mouth. The boy gathered ten or twelve flowers and took them to the king's court. The king reached out and took several flowers, and then the vizier and the grandees each took a flower.

The evil vizier was not there then, but it wasn't long before he entered and said, "Where's my share of the flower?"

"You weren't here," the boy said, "and there aren't any left for you."

The vizier's eyes blazed in anger, and he said under his breath, "I swear I'll put nails in your feet and torture you." When the boy left the king's court and went home, once again the evil vizier followed him. Approaching the house, he looked and saw that the boy had brought another ifrit much more beautiful than the first one, and every time she laughed, a flower fell from her mouth.

He returned to the king. "Have you gone crazy? Why are you acting like this?"

"My king," said the vizier, "why shouldn't I have gone out of my mind? You send that boy to bring a flower, but he has brought back the producer of the flower, and every time she laughs a jewel falls from her mouth. My king, if you don't do a way with this boy, he'll do a way with you."

"What's your plan?" asked the king. "How can I do away with him?"

"My king," said the vizier, "I'll make a plan for you, but you must do as I say. Send for him and say, 'Tonight I had a dream that my mother and father were burning in hell.' Then say, 'Go to hell and ask why my mother and father are suffering such

torment and how they can be saved.' Let the boy go in this way, and he'll never return."

In accordance with the viziers plan he a gain send for the boy and said to him, "My son, I don't know how to reward you. You have accomplished every task I have set for you. Now I have a task very close to my heart, and only you can carry it out. I have dreamed that my mother and father are in hell. You must go there, inquire about them, and find out how they can be saved. Then bring me the news."

The boy sat for a moment or two and then, "My lord, how can this task be carried out by me? Who would be able to do it?"

"This is my command," said the king, "and if you don't do it, I'll have you head cut off." What could the boy do? He couldn't refuse a command, but he did ask for a forty-day respite, the king granted it on condition that, this time too, the merchant stand as guarantee.

The boy went back to his mother and wives and explained the situation. The wives said, "Oh, this is a very simple task. This time we'll do away with the vizier and king for you."

The boy parked up a little and asked hoe. They answered, "You go to the king and say, 'You must make a huge fire for me. I'll go into the fire, and from there I'll go to hell.' we'll use our magic to cool the fire. You'll disappear, but we won't let any harm come to you .for all the king knows, you will have been burned to ashes." The boy went to the king and explained what he wanted. This pleased the evil vizier greatly, and he said, "Your majesty, order that every household in the city must make a load of wood ready and bring it to the plain." The vizier himself sent a hundred loads of wood was collected. The vizier convened himself that the king would marry one ifrit and he could marry the other.

On the appointed day afire was lit, and the flames licked against the sky.

The boy threw himself in, but nothing happened to him because of this ifrits'

Magic, and they hid him in there house. After forty days the boy emerged and went to king's court. All were astonished – especially the vizier.

'My king," the boy said, "There is no body in hell to take care of your mother and father. Every moment they melt and then are brought back to life to be burned all over again. This happens several times a day. Your majesty, there they explained to me that the price for your mother and father would be tow thousand liras each. They told me that unless the king brought the money himself, they wouldn't be released from their torment because no- body else can take his place."

As soon as the king heard this, he blazed up and immediately ordered a load of wood kindled the city. To the boy he said, "My own son, you will rule the country until I get back from hell." Then the fire was lit, and the king threw himself in. Of course, he immediately started sizzling and was burned to a crisp.

The boy mounted the king's throne and summoned the evil vizier. "Vizier," he said," I am now king and I rule the whole country. The king burned himself to cinders in front of your very eyes. Won't you tell me why you have been so against me?"

The vizier trembled and said, "King, I beg you not to do what I did. A vicious

person will do any evil deed."

The king ordered two wild horses brought. To each of them one of the vizier's legs was tied, and a cry was given. Each of the horses ran in a different direction, and the evil vizier was torn in two. The boy, who was a king's son by descent, ruled the country with justice.

## **Brokenhearted Uncle Homar**

They say that once, along time ago, there was an old man named Uncle Homar. Once his wife and child hurt him, so he left in grief and went to Baghdad, vowing never to return. As he approached Baghdad he met two young men, and after greetings were exchanged, they said, "We are also on our way to Baghdad. We can be companions." Along the way said, "Uncle, even though it is not far to the city, let each of us tell his adventures to the other so that the time will pass more quickly. Anyone who doesn't tell a story will have to carry the other in to the city on his back."

"All right," said Uncle Homar, "I agree."

The two young men told their adventures, and then came Uncle Homar's turn. No matter how hard he thought, he couldn't think of a single adventure.

"You have lived for seventy years," said the young men. "How is it that you don't know anything of your life? That being the case, you'll have to keep your promise and carry us both into the city on your back."

The old man was forced to hoist one of them on his back and take him into the city. Then he return two or three hours later and carried the other one into the city on his back.

The wife of king's son was watching this sight from the belvedere of the place, and she was perplexed. "How," she asked herself, "can a bent-over old man be carrying two young men on his back?" Immediately she ordered a servant to go bring them to her. When they came before the wife of the king's son, she asked, "Old man, with your age and white beard, why have you carried these two youth on your back? I wondered if, God forbid, they were sick or had been bitten by a snake, but I see that they are hail and hearty, and nothing is wrong with them."

In reply the old man explained to her the recounting of adventures. The woman was even more astonished and said, "Inasmuch as, with your age and experience, you

don't know anything about your life or adventures, you will stand here and learn while I, a mere woman trapped within these four walls, tell you what adventures I have had."

She ordered a nice meal brought for the two young men, and then she dismissed them. They said good-bye and went about their business. Then the woman turned to Uncle Homar and said, "Old man, as you see, I am now the wife of the king's son, but once upon a time I was the daughter of a vizier. We were very rich and had many servants, and I had my own room. I fell in love with a tailor, and on the pretext of having clothes made I would constantly send my servant after him, and he would come to my room.

"We would shut the door and enjoy ourselves to our fill, and then the youth would leave. We also had a horrible black slave. He had taken a secret liking to me, and only he knew why the tailor came to me. Now, old man, let me tell you what happened to me within the four walls of my room, and you tell me that, with all your seventy years, you don't know how to tell anything that has happened to you!

"One day the young man came to me, and after we had enjoyed ourselves thoroughly together, we were sitting and having a good time cutting apples and putting the pieces in each other's mouths. Unfortunately a piece of my apple got caught in his throat. He flailed his arms around several times, but it wouldn't come out. He choked and died on the spot.

I was devastated with grief, but, even worse, I was caught in a real dilemma. How was I to hide the body and keep people from finding out about me? I thought long and hard, and in the end I was convinced that it could only be done by the slave. So I sent for him and surreptitiously explained the situation. In reply the slave said, 'I have been mad with love for you for several years. If you promise me that I can have you, I'll do this thing for you. Otherwise, I'll tell everyone in the city about you and destroy your reputation.'

"What was I to do? I was helpless. I promised him that if he hid the body for me, I would do anything he wanted. Then the slave cut the body up, put the pieces in a sack, and took it away. Two or three hours later he came back to me and said, 'I have hidden it, so get yourself ready to have a good time.' I glared at him and said, 'Get out of here, you dishonorable wretch, if you don't want me to create a ruckus and have your head cut off!' The slave went away, but a little later he returned bringing the sack, which he flung into my room. Once again I was gripped by fear and said, 'I beg of you, take it away, and this time I won't resist. You can do with me whatever you want.' Once again the slave took the sack away. It wasn't long before he came back and attacked me. What was I to do? What power did I have? There was nothing I could do but give myself up and let my honor be taken.

"Yes, old man after a time the king's son sent word asking for me in marriage, and my father consented. The wedding was drawing near, and there I was in that state.

"Old man, I thought and thought what to do. The only thing I could think of was to summon one of the household servants. I gave him a lot of money and said, 'You must go from city to city and from province to province until you find me a maid who is the spirit and image of me. Don't worry about the cost.' The servant had no idea

why I was doing this and figured it was just a whim of mine. 'I will do as you ask, madam,' he said. Some time passed, and the servant returned with a maid. She was so much like me you'd have sworn we were two peas in a pod. Even if she had gone and stood next to my father, he would have said she was his daughter. After a while the maid came to know the ways and customs of our house, and she was completely at ease with me. Then I told her my story and said, "I am now promised to the king's son, but that slave has dishonored me. Therefore, when I am taken to my husband's house, I want you to put on my clothes and I'll put on yours."

"That is, you be the bride, and I'll be your servant, Later, when things settle down, I'll go back to being the wife of the king's son, and I'll make you my maid, and as long as I live I'll take care of you." 'Madam,' said the maid, 'as you wish, I'll gladly do whatever you say.'

"Old man, let me make it short. I became the servant in the house of the king's son, and my servant went as the bride, and nobody suspected the deception. Some days later I said to the servant, 'Come take my place, and I'll take my rightful place as the wife of the king's son.' Old man, no sooner were these words out of my mouth than the servant glared at me and screamed, 'Don't you ever dare repeat these words. If you're content to be a servant, you can stay. Otherwise I'll create a ruckus and they'll throw you out like a piece of garbage!'

"There was nothing I could do but put up with this for a time. One day the servant (who was then the wife of the king's son) ordered the fire lit for a bath, and she went inside the bathhouse. Furtively I put on her clothes and left mine where hers had been. Then I stocked up the flames under the bathhouse, which caught fire, and the servant was burned up inside. I cried out, 'Help! Our servant is burned alive! The king's son came running and asked what had happened. Our servant is burned alive,' I said. He was not at all concerned and said, 'As long as you are all right; let a hundred like her be sacrificed for you.' Thus, with no one knowing the difference, I took my rightful place.

"Now, old man, all this happened to time, a woman, within the four walls of a room, and I'm still young. You are a man who has lived a long time. Don't you know how to tell those to youth anything that has happened to you and so avoid having to carry them on your back? I shouldn't let you rest, but you might as well go away since you are so silly and stupid!"

After a time, the wife of the king's son was watching from the roof of the palace, and she saw Uncle Homar return to the spot where he had put the two youths down. He was pouring dust on his head and crying. She sent a servant to him and had him brought back, and she said, "what's wrong with you, old man? Why are acting like this?"

"Lady," he said, "for some time I have had a Job here at which I made forty liars, but during that time a woman got hold of me and said, 'I was your wife. You divorced me, but I have a son by you.' She dragged me into court, and the judge took my forty liras and gave them to her. I didn't know the woman and had never seen her before."

"All right," said the lady, "I'll get your forty liras back on condition that you not remain here. Go home to your wife and child." He promised that he would return to

his homeland. Then the woman said, "Go to the woman's house. Pick up the child and tell her you're taking him away. The woman won't be able to complain because she has already taken your money, and in this manner you'll get your money back."

The man did as the lady said. He went to the woman's house, picked up the child, and said, "It's my child, and I'm taking it away." The woman realized that he was determined to take the child. There was nothing she could do but give him back his forty liras in exchange for the child.

As soon as Uncle Homar had gotten his money back, greed got the better of him, and he thought to himself, "Why don't I work a while longer and make some more money. Then I can go home." Into a street he went, and there he saw a mulla giving lessons to his students. "This is good," he thought, "I'll leave my money with this mulla." In he went, greeted those present, and said, "Master, let me leave this in your keeping and after a time I'll come back for it."

The mulla said, "I'll be happy to keep it for you until you return."

The man worked for a while and made some more money, and then he said to himself, "Fine, now let me go to my wife and child." So he went to the mulla to reclaim his money. The mulla, however, acted surprised and said, "Neither do I know you, nor have you deposited any money here."

The man protested, but there was nothing he could do but return to the lady and explain what had happened. "All right," she said, "this time I'll get it back for you, but only on condition that you not stay here and that you get yourself back to your home and family as fast as possible. Tomorrow morning I'll go to the mulla, and while I'm there you come into the room and say, 'Master, give me my money back!'"

According to plan, the lady dressed herself as a female merchant, bedecked herself with her finery, and went to the mulla. After greetings were exchanged, she said, "Master, I'd like us to be alone, just the two of us. I have business with you." The mulla immediately sent his students away and said, "I'm at your service."

"Master," said the lady, "I am a lady merchant. My husband went away on business seven yours ago and I haven't heard from him since. However, recently I heard that he died. I'm still young, and I have a lot of money and property. I can tell you a secret, and that is that if a suitable man came my way, I'd marry him, but don't know how, according to religion, you'd advise me."

Just as the mulla was getting his hopes up for the woman, the old man came into the room and said, "Master, if it's no trouble, I need to go home. Perhaps you could give back the deposit I left with you." The mulla reached up to a shelf behind his head and gave the money to the old man, saying, "By God, since it was money entrusted to me, I didn't even look at it."

Not a moment later the lady's servant, also according to plan, came rushing into the room, saying, "Madam, good news! My master has come home!" And then and there the lady, the old man and the servant began dancing around.

The mulla took his turban in his hands and began to lead the dance.

"Master," the lady said, "I am dancing out of happiness over my husband's return, my servant is dancing because her master has come home, and the old man is dancing because he has gotten his money back. Why are you dancing?"

"Because, my lady," he said, "I have escaped from your deceit and trickery."

## The World-Revealing Goblet

They say that once upon a time Sultan Mahmud disguised himself in dervish clothing and went to the outskirts of the city, where he came to the city graveyard. As he looked from afar he saw under a tree a youth and a fairy sitting together next to a grave playing backgammon. Sultan Mahmud immediately fell madly in love with the fairy and sneaked up to the gravestone without their becoming aware of him. Some time passed with them occupied with their backgammon game. Three times the fairy beat the youth, and the youth said, "You beat me twice." They started fighting over this.

Then the fairy said, "I wish Sultan Mahmud were here to decide whether I have beat you three times or not!"

Just then Sultan Mahmud raised his head and said, "As God is my witness, you have beat him three times, not two" startled, the fairy flapped her wings and disappeared.

"Damn you, Sultan," the youth said. "What have you done?"

"Now calm down, and tell me how you got hold of that fairy," said the Sultan. "It wasn't easy to get hold of her," the youth replied, "but it would be easy for you."

"How would it be easy?" the Sultan asked. "Tell me quickly!"

"For a period of forty days," the youth said, "cut off a sheep's head every day, cut it up into minced meat, and bring it and put it down on this grave. One or two fairies will come. They will pick up the minced meat and go away at the end of the forty days the fairy you saw will come and play backgammon with you."

Sultan Mahmud returned to his palace gathered his servants and retinue and told them that every day for forty days they must cut off a sheep's head turn it into a certain grave. They must get themselves back as quickly as possible and under no circumstances eat any of the meat.

On the first day the minced meat was being taken on a tray to be placed next to the grave. Along the way a mangy kid turned up and begged them to give him a bit of meat. They refused and went on their way, but the mangy kid followed them.

When they put the tray of meat on the grave and turned their backs and left, the mangy kid attacked the meat and ate it. Immediately two or three fairies appeared,

picked up the tray and the mangy kid and departed. How far they traveled no one but God knows, but finally they reached the top of Mount Qaf.

There they finally gathered around the meat, and the queen of the fairies, whose name was Malak Rayhan and who was the one playing backgammon with the youth, divided the meat among them. She made a portion for the mangy kid too, and then she said to him, "Mangy kid, now that you are our guest, choose the fairy that is your heart's desire and enjoy yourself with her until morning."

Just before dawn the queen of the fairies sent for the mangy kid and asked. "How did you spend the night?"

"Lady," he said, "it was great, but none of them are worth one strand of your hair." No sooner were these words out of his mouth than the queen of the fairies slapped him. When the mangy kid woke up he looked around and saw that he was in bed between Hasan Maymandi, Sultan Mahmud's vizier, and Hasan's wife. Hasan Maymandi woke up, looked around, and saw the mangy kid lying next to his wife. His eyes blazed in anger and he started beating him with a stick. "Are you so rotten you don't even bother hiding your lover? How can this be?" he said to his wife. The woman swore that she had no knowledge of the affair, and the mangy kid explained the situation. Hasan Maymandi said, "If you are telling the truth, come, when the sultan's servants take the minced meat, well both follow them in secret and when they leave well go to the plate of meat."

In this way, when the plate of meat was made ready and the servant left, the two of them went to the meat, and just then three of four fairies appeared, grabbed them along with the meat, and went until they reached the palace on Mount Qaf. There, just as before, the food was divided, and once again a portion was given to them.

Then the queen of the fairies summoned Hasan Maymandi and said to him, "Vizier of Sultan Mahmud who doesn't know right from wrong, if someone lies to you, what do you do to him?"

"We cut off his head," he replied.

Malak Rayhan (that is, the queen of the fairies) said, "If that is so, then I will not cut off your head, May be I'll just throw you in prison on account of the lie Sultan Mahmud has told,"

"Lady," said the vizier, "he has lied, not I."

The queen of the fairies said, "No, that's not how it is. If a Sultan lies, what can be expected of this vizier?"

In this way Hasan Maymandi was thrown in to prison but his head was spared.

Then Malak Rayhan said to the mangy kid, "Go spend the night with the fairy of your heart's desire."

Just before dawn she sent for him and asked, "Was it to your liking?"

"Yes, lady," he said, "but a thousand of them are not worth one strand of your hair."

Again Malak Rayhan slapped him on the ear, and when the mangy kid opened his eyes, he looked and saw that he was in bed between another of Sultan Mahmud's viziers and his wife. Just like Hasan Maymandi, this vizier began hitting the mangy kid and chastising his wife. The mangy kid explained the situation from beginning to the end, and this vizier too got a desire to go to the fairies. Towards evening he and

the mangy kid were taken to the queen of the fairies' palace atop Mount Qaf, and once again the vizier was thrown in to prison on account of Sultan Mahmud's lie.

Just as before, the mangy kid spent the night enjoying himself with a fairy, and early in the morning when Malak Rayhan sent for him, the same things as before were said. This time too she slapped him, and when he opened his eyes and looked around, he was in bed between Sultan Mahmud and his wife.

Lets not drag it out, the Sultan was thrown in to prison in the same manner as before, but he was not given any food, After the mangy kid enjoyed himself, early he next morning Malak Rayhan slapped him again, and this time when he opened his eyes and looked around, he was between Ayaz the favorite vizier and his wife. Like the other vizier and the Sultan, Ayaz and the mangy kid went to Malak Rayhans palace. When the food was being divided, the queen of the fairies turned to Ayaz the favorite and said, "O vizier of Sultan Mahmud who doesn't know right from wrong, if some one tells a lie to you, what is his punishment?"

"Lady," said Ayaz, "I dont know. Come, I'll make a wager with you. If you win, ill go join those who are in prison. If you lose, you'll release them to me."

"I accept," said Malak Rayhan, "but let me know what you wager is."

"You go to sleep here," he said, "and I'll wake you up three times and speak to you. If I can do this, you lose, but if I can't wake you up and speak to you, then I lose."

"All right," said Malak Rayhan. "If I lie down without going to sleep and I don't answer you regardless of what you say, then you lose," Then Malak Rayhan lay down and covered herself. Ayaz brought a lamp, put it down next to himself, and said, "Listen, lamp, for I'm going to tell you a story.

"O lamp, long ago there were three men who were comrades, a wood chopper, a tailor, and a mulla. They had a donkey on which they loaded some odds and ends and set off on the road. Before they reached home, night fell upon them, so they went off the road, and since it was a time of highway robbers and brigands, they devised a plan whereby they would sleep by turns while one of them kept watch. O lamp, these three agreed amongst themselves that each one of them would keep watch for four hours, and thus throughout the twelve hours of the night one of them would be awake.

"The first turn fell to the wood chopper. He didn't keep watch for a quarter of an hour before he got drowsy, 'By God,' he said to himself, 'if I go to sleep and brigands attack us, they'll kill us and take our donkey and all our stuff. Let me occupy myself with something. May be it'll pass the time and keep me awake.' So he rose and got a stick. Then he took a wood chopping tool from the saddlebag and started whittling, and he made a head, arms, legs, and everything, in short, before his four hours were up, he had made a human form, then he awakened the tailor and went to sleep, he too got sleepy, and he looked around and saw a man standing nearby. He was afraid and shouted, 'Who are you?' But not a sound came from him, the tailor picked up a rock, listened, and heard a thump, he went forward and looked. It was the whittled shape. Then he said to himself, 'This is just a stick the woodcutter has fashioned for himself tonight. I'll get my tools and sew a set of women's clothing for it.' In this way he spent the four hours of his watch making a set of fine women's clothes in which he clothed

the figure. Then he woke the mulla up and went to sleep. When the mulla looked, he saw a person standing nearby. So he shouted, 'Who are you?'

There was no answer. He threw a rock at it, and there was a thump. He went over to it and said, 'This is just a stick. It's obvious the woodcutter whittled it and the tailor clothed it. Now I'll bow down before God and pray. I won't raise my head until he gives it a spirit.' A long time passed. the mulla didn't raise his head until suddenly he heard a lovely female voice saying, 'Master, raise your head. God has granted your prayer.'

"The mulla looked, and lo and behold the figure had turned in to beautiful woman.

"O lamp, I married that woman to the woodcutter because he was the first to whittle the stick."

As soon as Ayaz finished speaking, malak Rayhan woke up and said, "O vizier of Sultan Mahmud who doesn't know right from wrong, how could you give the woman to the woodcutter? All he did was whittle a stick. If the mulla hadn't prayed to God and he hadn't given it a spirit, how could it have turned in to a woman? Therefore it is only fitting that she be married to the mulla."

"Aha, lady." Said Ayaz. "Haven't we won? Haven't we made you speak?"

"You're right," said Malak Rayhan," but there are two times left, and you won't beat me then."

Ayaz started relating another story by saying, "Listen, O lamp. They say that long ago there were two brothers. Their houses were next to each other, and they loved each other very much, one of them was married but the other was single and didn't have enough money to get married, both of them were farmers and both worked in the fields planting wheat, when the harvest was gathered and the wheat was winnowed, the unmarried brother said to himself, 'By God, my brother has a wife and many expenses, It would be good for me to take a portion of the wheat give it to him.' The other brother also said to himself, 'By God, my unmarried brother is short of money and hasn't been able to get himself a wife. It would be good for me to take a portion of this harvest and maybe I can help him with it.' In short, they each loaded up a portion of the wheat from the harvest and took it to the other one. Along the way they passed each other and told each other what they were doing. In order not to hurt each others feelings, they exchanged their loads of wheat.

"O lamp, it so happened that one day the married brother was taking a load of wheat to the mill, so he went to his brother and said, 'I'm going to the mill, and I won't be home tonight. You go to my house and watch over them.'

"The unmarried brother said, 'I'll be happy to do it, brother. It's the least I can do.' The next morning the unmarried brother went to a pool near the road to wash. Just then the brother who had gone to the mill came with his load, and he said to himself, 'This brother of mine has no wife, and last night he was in our house, and the devil can make a man do any vile thing.' In this way he turned against his brother in his heart, and then and there they started arguing and fighting, they both pulled out daggers and cut each others heads off. Since the donkey knew the way, it went on home with its load of flour.

"The wife was waiting, but neither her husband nor his brother appeared. She set out down the road, and there she saw the bodies of her husband and his brother lying with their heads cut off to a pool. The wife wept bitterly. At that time several fairies in the guise of birds were perched on a tree. Pitying the women, they spoke and said, 'If some of our droppings are put on the necks of those dead men, their wounds will be healed and they will be all right.'

"The women immediately scooped up some of the droppings and rubbed them on the necks of her husband and his brother, and both of them revived, but in her haste the women put her husband's head on his brother's body and the brother's head on her husband's body, and that is how they both came back to life.

"All right, now you tell me which one should be considered the woman's husband and which one should be considered the companion? O lamp, for my part, I consider the one who got the companion's head and the husband's body as the woman's husband."

At this point Malak Rayhan jumped up again and said, "O vizier of Sultan Mahmud who doesn't know right from wrong, this was unforgivable. You humans get everything the wrong way around and upside down. Humans are recognized by their heads, and therefore one who had the husband's head and the brother's body should be the woman's husband, not the other way around." Once again Ayaz said, "Lady, haven't I won again?"

Malak Rayhan was amazed and said, "You're right, but one time more remains."

"The next time, no matter what you say, I wont wake up and I wont start talking."

Then Malak Rayhan went back to sleep, and Ayaz started telling another story. "O lamp," he said, "listen. Let me tell you another story.

"Once upon a time a long time ago there was a man. He had three sons. He also had a brother who had one daughter. The sons all grew up and it was time to find them wives. The brother's daughter also reached an age at which she should find a husband. All three of the boys desired their cousin. The uncle did not want to hurt their feeling, and so he summoned them and said, 'My sons, there are three of you, and I only have one daughter, I will give you a task. To whichever of you completes it first I will give my daughter.' The boys said, 'We will do whatever you say, uncle.' The uncle said, 'Then I will give each of you a thousand liras. Go to another country and use it to make your livings. I will give my daughter to whichever of you returns first with three thousand liras. The boys bowed to their uncle, kissed his hand and said, 'We accept.'

"So the uncle gave his nephews one thousand liras each, and they departed.

How far they traveled no one but God knows, but finally they came to a city, and there they rented a room in a house together.

"One day in the market the eldest brother saw a man who was selling a pigeon, the brother bargained with the man, who said the price of the pigeon was a thousand liras, the brothers head spun, and he said, 'How can you ask a thousand liras for a pigeon that is only worth a lira or two?'

" 'Sir', the man said, 'this is a carrier pigeon. it can't be compared to other pigeons.' The boy really wanted the pigeon, there was nothing he could do but give the

thousand liras. He put the in a cage, took it back to his room and there he took care of it.

"One day the middle brother was wandering through the market. A man with something in his hand was crying out, 'Elixir! Elixir!'

" 'Whats this an elixir for?' the boy asked.

" 'This is called the elixir of life,' he replied. 'place it on the lips, and any dead person will immediately come to life if he hasn't been buried.'

" 'How much is an ounce?' the boy asked.

" 'A thousand liras,' the man said.

"The boy bought an ounce, put it in a bottle, and took it home.

"One day the youngest brother happed upon a man in the market, he had a mirror for sale. The boy went and began negotiations.

" 'I'll sell it for a thousand liras, he said, 'but this is not an ordinary mirror. It is called a world-revealing mirror because you can see everything in the world in it.'

"The youngest brother wanted it very badly, so he paid the thousand liras and bought it.

"When all three brothers were together in their room, they were telling each other about the things they had bought. The eldest brother said, 'Mine is a carrier pigeon. Tie a letter under its wing, and it will deliver it to any place you want. 'The middle brother said, 'Mine is the elixir of life. Put it on the lips of any dead person, and he will immediately come to life again.' The youngest brother said, 'This mirror of mine reveals everything in the world, when you look into it, it will show you anything you want.'

" 'Well, if that's so,' the other brother said, 'let's look at our uncle's house and find out what our uncle's daughter is doing.'

"When they looked in to the mirror, they saw that their uncle's daughter was dead, and her body was on a slab being washed for burial. At once they wrote a letter in which they described how the elixir was to be used.

Then they tied the letter and the elixir under the pigeon's wing and sent it to their uncle's house. Then they took the world-revealing mirror to the roof to watch their uncle's house. In the mirror they saw that it wasn't long before the pigeon arrived. The letter was taken from the pigeon and read, and the elixir was placed on the girl's lips. At once she shuddered and came to life.

"O lamp, I would give the girl to the eldest brother, who bought the pigeon, because if it weren't for the carrier pigeon, the girl would have been buried, and it would have all been over."

Here Malak Rayhan could not control herself again, she woke up and said, "O vizier of Sultan Mahmud who doesn't know right from wrong, how could you allow such a thing? This girl should be given to the youngest brother because if it weren't for the world-revealing mirror, how would they have known that their uncle's daughter had died?"

Here Ayaz said, "Lady, didn't I tell you I could make you talk? Now, I have won, and you must keep your promise!"

Malak Rayhan gave a shout of joy, and Ayaz woke up. When he came to and looked around, Sultan Mahmud, Hasan Maymandi, and the other vizier were with him in a country far from their own. Then they all set out and took the road to their own country.

## The King Who Had Seven Sons

They say that once long ago there was a king who had seven sons, and his wife was pregnant, it happened that the king went on a long journey, but before he left he said to his eldest son and successor, "My son, if your mother gives birth to a boy, give a large banquet with entertainment for him, but if it is a girl, take her out in secret and kill her in the wilderness."

Having given this charge, the king went away, after her nine months and nine days were completed, the king's wife gave birth to a girl, in accordance with the father's wishes, the king's son took the swaddled bade and set out into the desert. In the vicinity was a mill, and it happened that the miller's house, and the miller's wife accepted to raise it in place of her own dead child.

Years came and went. The girl grew and reached a marriageable age. One day the king went out hunting and happened to pass by the mill, and there his eyes fell upon the miller's daughter, who was a beauty to take your breath away, the king immediately fell hopelessly in love with her and asked the miller for her hand in marriage. No matter how hard the viziers and courtiers tried to dissuade him, it was of no use. The king's son who knew about the affair tried very hard to dissuade his father from taking a wife, saying, "Father, you are a king and a king's son. What makes you want to marry a miller's daughter? How can such a thing be appropriate to your station?"

Nonetheless, nothing would dissuade the father from his decision.

"As God is one and cannot be two," he said, "I have made my decision and I'm sticking to it."

What could the son do? He had explain the situation to him. The king got very angry and ordered both his son and his daughter in to exile.

Brother and sister got on a horse, taking with them what they needed, and left their fathers realm. Hoe far they went nobody knows, but they happened upon a city, there they saw that the city was silent as the grave and the people were as though in

mourning. They went to a house, and after they had rested a bit, the youth asked the owner, "Uncle, why is your city so sad and silent?"

"My son," he replied, "for a time we have been suffering from a terrible catastrophe. No matter what we do, nothing helps. A dragon has stopped up the city's water, and every day it demands from us a maiden to eat, only then will it let us have water. Our homes are destroyed, and no one is left to help us."

"Uncle" asked the youth, "whose turn is it tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow it is the turn of the king's daughter! That is why you have found the city so sad and silent".

The next morning all the men and women of the city gathered to go to the spring. As the youth watched, the king's daughter was decorated and sent to the dragon. It was painful for him to think that such a beautiful young princess should be devoured by a horrid dragon, so he went and stood before the princess and said, "Stay where you are. I'll deal with this dragon and put an end to it," The people all begged him, saying, "You are young, and this won't do you any good. Leave us alone to deal with our problem." But the youth wouldn't listen to anyone. Taking a sword in each hand, he went before the dragon and said, "Accursed one, how are you going to escape me? You are a tyrant, and I am your nemesis!"

The dragon glared in anger, attacked the youth, and swallowed him whole, but wielding his swords left and right, the youth cut the dragon open and stepped out unharmed as the dragon fell to the ground, dead.

The people all began rejoicing and congratulating the youth, then the king's daughter, who was so happy she was about to faint, dipped her hands in the dragon's blood and rubbed them on the youth's back so she would recognize him later.

That day there was great rejoicing in the city, and the king ordered that the youth's good and courageous deed be rewarded, many people presented themselves and claimed to have done the heroic deed, but the king's daughter gave them all the lie, for the one who had rescued her had been marked, finally there was no one left in the city but a youth who, together with his sister, had rented a house on the outskirts of town. The king ordered him brought before him, and when the princess saw her mark, she recognized him and said, "Father, this is the hero who saved me and the city."

The king honored and thanked him greatly, saying, "My son, I will reward you with however many worldly goods, you want, and I will still be in your debt."

"Long live the king," replied the youth. "Keep your reward for later."

After a while, while the youth was out hunting one day, his sister went to a well in the midst of the forest to draw water. There, at the bottom of the well, she saw a demon who was calling out to her and saying, "Please help me out of this well." The girl let down a rope and got him out. Then she brought him clothes and food. The demon thanked her profusely and was about to tell her good-bye and go when she said, "In no way will I let you go. You must sleep with me. Otherwise I'll tell my brother and he'll cut you to pieces." Helpless, the demon slept with her, and in the end the girl got pregnant and she turned pale. "Sister," her brother kept asking, "what's wrong with you? Why are you like this?" But she only replied, "what can I do, dear brother? I'm ill, and it's God's will"

After nine months and nine days, when she gave birth to a boy, she said to the demon, "What's to be done? If my brother finds out, he'll cut us both in two"

"By God," the demon replied, you'll have to find a remedy yourself"

"You take this babe and put him in my brother's path so he'll find it when he returns from hunting, He's softhearted and compassionate, and he'll bring it with him, the demon did as she said, and that night, when the youth returned from hunting, he brought the swaddled babe with him, saying,

"Sister! I have good news. I've found a companion for you."

The girl acted surprised and said, "But, brother, where am I going to get the milk to feed this baby? Nevertheless, it's good you saved this poor baby from dying. Come, let us pray and turn our faces to the qiblah and beseech God, maybe milk will come to my breasts so that I can take care of this beautiful child."

"Very well," the brother said innocently, and as they were praying the girl said, "Brother, God has accepted our prayer. My breasts have filled with milk."

Years came, and years went. The child grew up, and every day the brother went out hunting while the sister enjoyed herself with her husband the demon, however, she felt she wasn't free, for she was afraid her secret would be revealed and her brother would kill her, therefore, she said to her husband the demon, "Husband, you must find a remedy for this headache of ours, do something to get rid of my brother; otherwise we'll have no rest."

"All right," said the demon, "you find me a way to get rid of him." "Then listen to what I tell you," said the women, "My brother comes back from hunting every night, and he always stops at a spring to drink some water. You go turn yourself into poison, get into the water, and kill him." The child was listening to this. He got up, took a pot of water to his old uncle, and when the uncle went to the spring to drink, he gave him the pot of water and didn't let him drink from the spring, and thus he saved him.

No matter how hard the uncle tried to get him to tell him the reason for what he had done, he wouldn't tell him.

The next day the woman said to her husband the demon, "Today you turn in to a scorpion and crouch behind the door, when he come in, sting him so that he'll drop dead." The boy was listening to this plan, and when his uncle came home, he went in to the room with him and stepped on the scorpion.

Therefore the demon couldn't sting the uncle, so this time too the boy saved him.

The third day the woman said, "All right, turn yourself into a snake, curl up in his shoe, and when he puts his foot in it, bite him and kill him!"

The boy was again listening to this plan, and when the uncle started to put his shoes on, he leapt up, grabbed the shoe, and shook the snake out, in this way all the plans the horrible sister made came to naught, and she failed to get rid of her brother.

One day the brother came back from hunting before his usual time, and he found his sister sleeping with the demon. They had left the small boy to his own devices, and they were enjoying themselves, the brother pulled out a dagger and sliced them both in two. When the small boy came in and saw what had happened, he was afraid and said, "Uncle, are you going to kill me too?"

"No, nephew," he said, "you are a child and guiltless, why should I kill you?"

Then the small boy said, "Uncle, right or wrong, I am the son of this man and woman. Several times they have tried to get rid of you, but I never let it happen." Then he told him the story of poisoning the water in the spring, the scorpion, and the snake.

Let's be brief. The king's son packed his belongings and set out with the small boy for his father's house. How far they traveled no one but God knows, but they came to a place where the king's son put down his load so that they could rest there for the night. "Uncle," said the nephew, "I don't want us to stay here, I don't think it's a good place." But the uncle paid no attention to what he said and went to sleep for the night. There was nothing for the nephew to do but stay awake all night and keep watch. In the middle of the night a demon came rumbling like the wind and said, "I smell strangers hereabouts. Who has killed my brother? I'll crush him and take his dust to the sky!"

The small boy, who on his father's side was the child of a demon, pulled out a dagger, killed the demon on the spot, cut off his nose and ears and put them in a sack, and then went to sleep. In the morning the boy told his uncle about the demon, and the uncle thanked him. Then they set out. How far they went no one knows, but they came to a place where a female demon was sitting with her left breast thrown over her shoulder and her right breast in her own mouth. She roared and said, "No one who falls into my clutches will escape from me. I'll chop him in to little pieces. Fe fi fo fum."

"Uncle," said the small boy, "please do as I say. Sneak around behind her and, without her being aware that you are near her, put her right breast in your mouth and suck on it. When you do this, she won't hurt you because she'll look upon you as her own son and reveal her secret to you." The prince did as his nephew said. When he put the demon's breast in his mouth, the demon shuddered and said, "Human, who revealed this to you? I swear by God if you hadn't done it, I'd have pulverized you and sent you in to the sky. What can I do? Now you've made me your mother tell me what you're looking for."

"I'm going to my father's house," he said.

"My son," she said, "the way to your father's house is extremely difficult and filled with danger. In one place you'll have to contend with confusion, and in another you'll encounter a great difficulty." In short, she told him all the travails of the way and what he must do and must not do. Then the prince and his nephew set off, they traveled for a long time until they came near a city and pitched their tent on the outskirts of town. Then they went into town to buy the thing they needed, and there they found the people silent and grieving, as though they were in mourning. When they asked someone the reason, he said, "A dragon has stopped up the city's water supply, and every day we have to choose a maiden and give her to the dragon to eat, otherwise it won't let a drop of water reach us and we'll die of thirst. Tomorrow it's the turn of the king's daughter that's why you see all the people in such a state."

Greatly saddened and burdened with grief they made their way back to their tent, in the middle of the night the small boy sneaked away from his uncle and went to the

spring, where he called out to the dragon and said, "Infidel, show yourself to me!" Since the boy was of the race of demons, he had incredible strength. He pulled out his sword and chopped the dragon to bits. Then he stuck the sword in the ground and put a spell on it so that it wouldn't come out of the ground for anyone else, then he went back to his uncle and went to sleep.

The next morning all the people of the city went to the spring to say their last good-byes to the princess, but when they got there they found the dragon lying in bits and pieces. There was rejoicing in all the houses, lanes, and streets of the city, and a herald announced throughout town that whoever had done this brave act should come so the king could reward him.

Anyone who presented himself claiming to have done it should have been able to draw the sword out of the ground, but no one could do it. Then the king was told that there was no one left in town other than two people who had pitched a tent on the outskirts, and no one knew whether they were father and son, brothers, or what. The king sent for them, and along the way the small boy said to his uncle, "Tell them you did it." And he told him the spell for pulling out the sword. In this way, when they went in to the king's court, the uncle said, "Your majesty, I killed the dragon," and in order to prove his claim he went and drew out the sword. The king showered him with honors and said, "Take as much money, property, gold, or jewels as you want." But the nephew whispered in his ear and said, "Say to him, 'I don't want any worldly goods. I only want a flower from your garden.' "

When the prince said this, the king immediately understood what he wanted and gave him his daughter in marriage. Supplied by the king, they set out for the youth's father's country. They traveled for a long time until they came to a city, and when they looked they saw that the people had gathered to have a falcon choose a new king because the old king had fulfilled God's command and died. The person on whose head the falcon landed would be king. The travelers went stood next to the people to watch, and when the falcon was released, it circled over the people and landed on the youth's head. Once they realized that he was a stranger and not of the city, they said, "The falcon made a mistake. Let's let it fly again."

They repeated it three times, but each time the falcon landed on the youths head. Then they put the king's crown on his head and seated him on the throne. He made his nephew his vizier, and then he wrote a letter to his father, who in the meantime had cried his eyes out over the loss of his son. When the letter reached the father, his eyes turned bright from happiness and joy, and father and son went to each other's countries and rejoiced in each other.

## The Results of stinginess

Long ago there was a man who worked as a porter. Although he was broad shouldered and strong, he never made any money, and often he would lie down to sleep at night hungry.

One day a hadji merchant told him to clean his shop. Since the man had been hoping someone would give him a job at which he could make a few pence, he started straightening up to the wares, sweeping the shop, and cleaning everything there. At noon, when he finished his work and wanted to be given his wages and get along his way, the miserly hadji started making excuses, saying that the man hadn't done his job well and that he had finished too soon, and he refused to give him his wage. Despondent, the poor man left, tired and hungry. As he wandered around the city, he was hungry but had no money to buy anything to eat. Helpless, he approached the door of a house.

The lady of the house opened the door and said, yes, brother, what do you want?

"Dear lady," he said, "for heaven's sake, give me a bit of lunch, I am very tired and hungry."

"All right," the woman said, "but with those shoulders and arms, why don't you have a job by which you can live honorably?"

The man explained to her what had happened with the merchant, whose shop in the market he described to her. The woman knew from his description that the merchant could only be her husband, who was just so dishonest and miserly. She invited the man in and gave him a nice meal. She also gave him a lira and a set of the hadji's clothes to put on. She said, "Come back tomorrow at noon." The man thanked her very much, said good-bye, and went to the market, passing by the merchant's shop. When the hadji saw the porter wearing his clothes, he called out to him and said, "Where did you get those?"

"Hadji," he replied, "today when I left you in despair, I knocked on the door of a great house, and a beautiful young lady opened the door and asked me in. She served me nicely and gave me this set of clothes and a lira, and she told me to come back to see her tomorrow at noon."

The merchant realized from the clothes that the man had been at his house, and thus he began to suspect his wife. At noon the next day the porter went back to the same house, and as the day before, the woman served him a nice meal. Just then the merchant knocked at the door. "What will you do?" the woman asked. "This is my husband come home, if he sees you here now, he'll suspect the worst and kill you! Get up, go under that basket." The woman put the basket over the man and covered it with a piece of cloth. The hadji did not usually come home until evening, but he had come this day to catch the man with his wife and prove his suspicions.

"What's wrong, hadji?" the woman asked. "Why are you so upset and frowning? Why have you come home today at noon?"

"Nothing wrong," he said, "I'm a little out of sorts, and my head hurts." The woman brought him some food, but the hadji pushed it away and didn't eat anything on the pretext that his head hurt. A short while later the hadji looked all over for the man. In a corner of the room he saw a rug rolled up. Immediately he plunged a knife into it because he thought the man was hidden in it. His wife, seeing him doing this, went to her husband and said, "Hadji what's wrong with you? Why are you doing this?" The hadji didn't want to embarrass himself, so he said, "This rug is old and tattered and of no use at all. I've cut it to shreds so that I can buy a new rug, what do we have money for if we can't spend it on ourselves?" Then the hadji went back to the market with lingering suspicions. The hadji's wife got the man out from under the basket. Then she took the clothes she had given him the day before, dressed him in another set of the hadji's clothes, gave him another lira, and said, come back to see me at noon tomorrow." The man thanked her profusely and went to the market, where he passed by the hadji's shop. The hadji looked and saw that the man had on another set of his clothes, laughing, he approached the hadji and said,

"Today there was a rare sight. I went back to the woman's house, and while I was there the lord of the house came home. His wife put me under a basket. The man stabbed a rug and went out. The lady of the house gave me another set of clothes and a lira and told me I had to come back to see her at noon tomorrow." The poor man was saying this, but he didn't know that the merchant was the woman's husband. Thus the hadji got worried and began to suspect the worst of his wife.

The next day the man went back to the woman's house, and the hadji knocked at the door. The woman put an old jar over the man's head and made a hole in it so that he could breathe. Then she put a large piece of wood in the pool in the garden and tied the man to it. In this manner the man could move about in the water. His head was in the jar, but the merchant wouldn't be able to discern it. He searched everywhere but he didn't see the man.

Then he attacked the basket and stabbed it with a knife. The wife ran to him and said, "Husband! What are you doing? What's come over you that you tear something up every day?"

"Wife," he replied, "they were old, and I'll buy others. We have a lot of money, what good is it if we don't use it?"

Then she put some dates in front of the hadji. Not having eaten for two days, the hadji was hungry and began eating the dates. "Hadji," the wife said, "let's make a wager. Let's throw the date pits into the hole in that jar in the pool. I'll give you a lira for every pit you get in. If I have good aim and hit the target, you'll have to give me a lira for every pit I get in." Although from the pool the man couldn't see them, he knew which direction their voices were coming from. Every time the husband threw a date pit at the hole in the jar, the man twisted his neck and the pit fell in the water. Every time the wife threw, the man turned the hole so that she would hit the target. In this way the merchant lost thirty or forty liras. Then the hadji returned in despair to the market. The wife got the man out of the water, gave him his fill of food, and gave him another set of her husband's clothes. She also gave him the thirty or forty liras she had won from her husband and said, "Go, and God be with you. With this money you can find work." The man was very grateful and departed for the market. This time too he went to the hadji and, without knowing that the woman was the merchant's wife, told him everything that had happened.

The merchant was about to go out of this mind. He went to his wife's brothers and said, "Your sister is having an affair with a porter, and she has given him all my money and clothes."

"We know our sister," the brothers said, "and we are convinced that she couldn't be doing anything wrong. If you can prove to us that she has done this thing, we will tear her to pieces."

"All right," said the merchant. "I will invite the porter home and he'll tell you everything."

The next day the hadji said to the porter, "Brother, I cheated you when I didn't give you your wage for cleaning my shop. In recompense I must invite you to my house."

"I am very grateful, but now I have my own money," the man kept saying.

However, the hadji wouldn't take no for an answer. That evening he took the man to the back of his house so he wouldn't know it was the house of the woman he had been visiting. He had also invited his wife's brothers. After the evening meal, the hadji said to the man, "Brother tell me what you saw." He started telling everything. Since the wife was listening from the other side of the curtain, she realized it was trap her husband had set.

She sent one of her children in, saying, "Go sit next to your father." When the man saw the child, he recognized it and realized that it was the merchant's house he had been frequenting. Therefore, when he finished his story, he said, "And when the woman hit me with a date pit, it struck me on the nose and I woke up."

"Have you been telling us a dream or something that actually happened?" the brothers asked.

"It was just a dream I had I've been telling you," he said. At this point the wife's brothers said to their brother-in-law the hadji, "You have slandered our sister." Then and there they stabbed the hadji and killed him, and they buried him secretly in the

woods. After a short while they gave their sister to the porter in marriage, and in this way he inherited the hadji's money and property.

## **Give Up Your Head But Don't Divulge Your Secret**

They say that long ago there was a man who made gold, and one of the ingredient of that gold was apple juice. The king of the city got wind that someone in the city was making gold, but no matter how hard he tried to find out who it was, he couldn't. The king told his vizier about the matter and said, "All I know is that this man puts apple juice in to his gold."

"Leave it to me, your majesty," said the vizier, "I'll find out."

"How?" asked the king.

"You hire somebody to bring us a load of apples from a far-away country since now is not apple season here. I'll take care of the rest."

After a while the load of apples came and the vizier said, "Your majesty, you and I have to disguise ourselves and sell these apples in order to catch the man." In this way the disguised king and the vizier took a bag full of apples to the market and set them down. To anyone who wanted to buy, they said, "A lira per apple." Since the going rate for apples was a piastre each, no one bought any from them.

That same day the man who made gold found out that there were apples in the market even though it wasn't the season for apples. "By God," he said to himself, "this is some sort of trap that has been set for me." Nonetheless, he couldn't restrain himself, so out he went, picked up an apple, and laid down a piaster. They threw the piaster back at him and said, "We are selling apples for a lira apiece." The man put the apple down and went on his way. The next day he took his child, whom he had instructed to start crying when they passed the apples and say, "I want an apple." Thus, when the child saw the apple, he started crying and pestering his father, saying, "You have to buy me an apple!" He picked up an apple, and put down a piaster, but they said, "Apples are a lira apiece." So the man had to put the apple back.

The next day he took his child again, and the child cried and pestered him. He picked up an apple for the child. Now the king and the vizier were highly suspicious

that he might be the man who made gold. "Apples are two liras apiece," they said. No matter how hard tried to bargain he couldn't get anywhere and had to put the apple back.

In the same manner on the following day he picked up an apple for the child, but they said, "Today we're selling apples for three liras apiece." The man really needed an apple, and when he saw that the price was increasing by a lira a day, he had to pay three liras for one. Immediately the vizier seized him by the wrist and said, "Your majesty, this is he. If he weren't the one, why would he buy an apple for three liras when he can get one for a piaster?"

Then they took him to the king's house, and the king said, "My son I have no need to harm you. You make gold for me, and I'll make you my vizier."

"Your majesty," said the man, "what's this? I know how to do something much more important and ingenious."

"What's that?" asked the king.

"Your majesty," he replied, "now I am going to cut your head off with this knife, and then, with remedy I have here, I'm going to make you well and bring you back to life."

"Can you really do that?" asked the king.

The vizier seized the man's arm and said, "Don't do it, your majesty." He wants to do away with you. If he can really do it, let him first cut off his own head and use the remedy so we can see if he gets well or not."

"I'm ready," said the man as he lowered his head in front of them. They used the knife to cut his head off, and then they applied the remedy he did not get well, however. He was stone dead.

"Your majesty," said the vizier, "didn't I tell you so?" Rather than divulge the secret of his craft, this man wanted to bring calamity down upon you. By his own volition he gave up his head rather than divulge his secret.

## **The Grateful Bear**

Long time ago there was a hunter who went out every day to hunt in the wilderness and mountains. One day a bear came across his path. The hunter wanted to kill it, but the bear lay down on its back and raised its paws to heaven as though praying, moved by compassion, the man refrained from killing it. The bear stood up, took the man by the hand, and led him away. "By God," the hunter said to himself, "it's obvious this bear wants me to do something for it."

Off they went until they stopped under a tree. There the bear held its head in its hands, as though to indicate, "put the head down thus." Then he led the man by his hand to another tree, and when he looked he saw a male and a female bear playing. The bear took the barrel of the gun and pointed it to the female bear, as though to say, "Kill this female bear for me." The man pointed the gun at the male bear, but the bear again moved it to point at the female bear. After the hunter had killed the female bear, the bear hugged him, picked him up, and carried him far away to the bear's home. The bear wouldn't leave him until he went home, and with a sign of his paw, he said goodbye and left.

One cold, snowy, rainy winter night, when it was too black to see anything, a tap tap came at the hunter's door. Gripped with fear, the hunter picked up his gun, opened the door, and looked. There was the bear, wearing an overcoat and standing on its hind legs with a club in its hand, pointing to a flock of sheep it had brought. The man put his hand to his throat and signaled that the bear had not done a good deed, and that it would give him a lot of trouble. With growls and signs the bear made him understand that it had brought the sheep from a distant place, then it saluted him and went away.

The next morning the people of the village were amazed at all the sheep, especially since the man had previously been poor and hadn't had many sheep or property. Therefore they started asking around and gossiping. "My father had my sheep," he said, "and they were with people on the other side of the mountains. Now, however, there is no feed left to give them, so they returned them to me. I will have to cull them and sell some of them." In this way he sold many of them and got rich.

Some more time passed. One night when it was snowing and raining again, there came a knock at the door in the middle of the night, the man said to himself, "By God, one way or another, it's the bear." When he opened the door and looked, there was the bear with a pair of cartridge belts crisscrossed over its breast, and in its hand was a gun that in those days a brother wouldn't have sold to his own brother for a thousand dinars. The man's head spun, and he pulled out a dagger and put it to his neck, and with motions he made the bear understand that on account of this act they would cut his head off, the bear understood what he meant and growled, motioning afar, as if to say that it had brought them from afar and there was no fear, the man picked them up and motioned that the bear wasn't to bring anything else.

Some time passed, and one dark night the wind was blowing and there was a blizzard. Around midnight there came a knock at the door, the man knew at once it was the bear, when he opened the door and looked, there was the bear with a huge jar of oil on its back. It put the jar down. What could the man do? He took out his dagger and drew it across his neck to make the bear understand that this was enough. He didn't want anything else. All he had done was to kill the female bear, but this bear just didn't know how to thank him.

## Hasan the Trapper

Once upon a time was a hunter whose name was Hasan the Trapper. He knew the languages of all animals and birds. One day he went out hunting. While in the wilderness he saw an old snake fighting with beautiful young female snake. The old snake was trying to rape the other. Hasan was highly displeased by this, so he pulled out an arrow to kill the old snake, but by chance the arrow struck not the old snake but the young one and wounded it. By chance the young snake was the daughter of the king of the snakes. The young snake went home wounded, and her father asked her, "Daughter, how came you to be like this? Who has wounded you?"

The daughter of the king of the snakes was too embarrassed to give all the details to her father, and all she said was, "Hasan the Trapper wounded me."

The king of the snakes glowered in anger and ordered all the snakes to gather. Then he said, "Hasan the Trapper has done me a great wrong. He is now in the village mosque. Whom should I appoint to go into his shoe and bite him when he comes out and puts his shoe on?"

A very clever and worldly snake stood up and said, "My lord, I'll go." Thus the snake went to the mosque and curled up in Hasan's shoe and listened while Hasan was inside telling the people about the event. "People, listen to me:

An old snake had attacked a young female snake, and since I understand the languages of all animals, I realized that the old snake was attacking the young snake and wanted to rape her. The young snake was resisting him and refusing to give in to him. I couldn't stand for such tyranny and injustice, so I pulled out an arrow to kill him, but unfortunately it hit the young one and wounded it."

When the snake heard this, he ran back to the king of the snakes and said, "My lord, Hasan the Trapper says it was otherwise." The king summoned his daughter and asked, "Daughter, how can you blame Hasan? He says it was otherwise."

"Father," said the daughter, "he is right. I was too embarrassed to tell the truth."

"If this is so," said the king of the snakes, "Hasan the Trapper has done us a great favor and is worthy of thanks and reward." And he told the snake to summon Hasan.

The snake went and started hissing. Hasan understood and came to him. The snake said, "Actually, I came before to bite you on your foot and kill you because we had been told that you wounded the daughter of the king of the snakes for on good reason. However, since I was listening to what you were saying, I quickly took the news back to the king of the snakes. For this reason he wants you to go to him so that he can reward you. You say to him, 'I didn't do it to be rewarded, but if you insist on rewarding me, give me a drop of your venom.' Please don't mention my name in any of this, for if the king of the snakes puts a bit of his venom on your mouth, wherever you go all plants and trees will call out to you and tell you what ailment they are good for. In this way you will become a famous physician and get lots of money and property."

When they came before the king of the snakes, he greeted Hasan warmly, thanked him for his courage, and said, "I want to reward you."

"I don't want anything," replied Hasan.

"But I want to give you something as a reward," said the king.

"If you insist on rewarding me," said Hasan, "then I want a bit of your venom."

The king of the snakes recoiled at these words and asked, "Who coached you to say this?"

"Nobody coached me," said Hasan. "If you are going to reward me, that's what I want."

The king of the snakes nodded his head and said, "Then I must because you have done me a favor, but if you ever disclose the secret to anyone, you'll die on the spot."

After receiving the reward, wherever Hasan the Trapper went, the plants and trees called out to him and told him what they were good for. In this way he became the most famous physician in the country, and nobody ever came away from him without being cured. It wasn't long before Hasan the Trapper became rich.

One day his wife pestered him, saying, "You have to tell me the secret of this success." No matter how much Hasan told her that he couldn't tell her, for if he did, he would die on the spot, it did no good. His wife didn't pay any attention to anything he said and insisted.

Hasan the Trapper had a dog and a rooster at home. When his wife again complained, he said to her, "All right. You don't mind seeing me die?"

"I don't know anything about all that," she replied. "I just want you to tell me the secret. Whatever happens then will happen."

"What can I do?" said the husband helplessly. "Go to the market and buy me a winding sheet and implement for my burial. When you come back I'll reveal the secret to you."

The dog was listening to this. Sensing that his master was going to die, he crept into a corner and tears began to stream from his eyes. It wasn't long before the rooster came home and saw the dog weeping. When he asked what was going on, the dog said, "If tears are not good for such a situation, then what are they good for? Our master Hasan is going to die, and then I'll be put out into the streets, and they'll cut your head off and eat you." Then the dog told the rooster all about the situation. The rooster said, "Damn this master of mine Hasan! Here I am a rooster who goes out every day

and enjoys himself with ten or twelve hens and then comes home by himself. Is our master Hasan not enough of a man to get rid of this awful wife?"

Since Hasan knew the languages of all animals and birds, he listened carefully of the conversation between the dog and the rooster, and in his heart he reflected on the evil conduct of his wife, for whom it was so easy to see him die, while his dog was overcome with grief and weeping. Not much time passed before his wife came back in with a piece of untanned leather, thread, and soap.

"Wife," said Hasan, "what is all this?"

Coolly she replied, "It's stuff for burying you."

"Is this of so little importance to you?" asked Hasan. Therefore he quickly sent for two or three neighbors and divorced his wife in their presence. A short time later he got another wife. In this way the rooster's words helped him, and he escaped from his pitiless wife and started out on a new life

## **The Results of Greed**

They say that a long time ago there was a poor shepherd. Every day he took his flock of sheep to a meadow far from the village, and there he pastured them.

One day around midday, near a pile of rocks, he took a sheep, milked it into a pot, and let it go. Putting the pot next to the rocks, he went and sat down to eat some bread and drink some milk. From after his eye spied a snake coming out from the pile of rocks. It swallowed the milk in the pot and then went back into the rocks, took a coin in its mouth, brought it, and put it into the pot. The shepherd came and put the coin in his purse, and he was so happy his feet didn't touch the ground.

In the evening he took his flock home, but that night he didn't sleep a wink. The next morning he took his flock to the same place, and just as he had done the day before, he milked a sheep into the pot and put it near the pile of rocks. Once again the snake came, swallowed the milk, and put a coin in the pot.

The shepherd continued doing this for many days, and in this way he became rich and decided to go on the pilgrimage. Before setting out on his journey, he called his son and disclosed his secret to him. After his father left, the boy led the flock out to the pile of rocks, milked a sheep into the pot, and went away to watch and see what would happen. Just as before, the snake came out, swallowed the milk, and put a coin in the pot. The son started thinking to himself, "By God, I have a silly father. Why should I sit around waiting for one coin a day? Why don't I just kill the snake and get the whole treasure for myself?"

The next day he took a sword, and when the snake came out, he attacked it with the sword and cut off its tail. The snake slithered back into the rocks. Then the son destroyed the pile of rocks, turning them upside down, but there was no snake and no treasure either. There was nothing he could do but put the pile back the way it had been, in hopes that the snake would come again and give him a coin.

The following day the boy put the pot of milk down next to the pile of rocks and went a little way off. The snake hissed and attacked the boy, bit him on the top of his head, and killed him dead on the spot.

The shepherd returned from the pilgrimage. After the rejoicing was over, he went to the pile of rocks one day. To himself he said, "One way or another, this son of mine must have done something to make the snake kill him." When the man was near the pile of rocks, the snake came out to him, started speaking, and said, "It would have been better for you, O man, not to have divulged your secret to your son. You think I am a snake and that I take these coins from a treasure trove under this rock, but you should know that I am not a snake. I am the daughter of the king of the fairies, and I have been turned into a snake by a magic spell. Recently your son attacked me and cut my tail off. When my spell wears off, I will be marred. Now, as a punishment for not keeping this secret in your heart, I will have to kill you too." And she bit the man on top of his head and killed him dead on the spot.

## **The Zay Tree and the Tay Falcon**

They say that long ago there was a king who had three sons. It happened that the king went blind in both eyes, and no matter how the physicians treated him, they had no success. The astrologers looked into the matter and said, "If the zay tree and the tay falcon can be found for him, he will regain his sight, provided the falcon goes to the top of the tree and sings for him."

When asked where the tree and falcon were to be found, the astrologers answered, "They are in a country far, far away in the city of the fairies, beyond Mount Qaf, guarded by demons. They will be very difficult to obtain, if at all possible."

The people said, "The king has three sons. If this zay tree and tay falcon can't be found by them, they ought to die." The sons set out courageously, each one in a different direction and each wanting to be the one to get these things. The youngest brother, who had a different mother from the other two, chose a way for himself all alone. Only God knows how far he went before he reached the outskirts of a city, where he looked and saw that the city was surrounded by a great wall with a huge gate in the wall. When he approached the gate, the guards stopped him and said, "Every stranger who comes to our city must first go before the king. After that he may go about his business." Thus he was taken before the king of the city.

"We ask a few questions of all who come to our city," the king said.

"If they can answer them, we reward them and let them go about their business. If they can't answer, we cut their heads off. You see that tower? We have made it of the skulls of such people."

"Your majesty," said the youth, "I am ready to answer any question."

"Good," said the king. "In the behavior of living things does nature or nurture take precedence?"

"Your majesty," answered the youth, "nature takes precedence."

"No," said the king. "It is not so, and I'll prove it to you." The king rang a bell, and immediately two cats came into the room, each holding a candle. They lit the candles and then began twirling around a basin of water. Then they extinguished the candles and took down the basin of water, which had been placed on a slightly elevated place.

The king turned to the youth and said, "Well, did the cats' mother and fathers know how to do this or not?"

"Obviously they did not," answered the youth.

"Just so," said the king. "They learned it by training. Now, have you lost the bet or not?"

The youth was obliged to confess that he had lost.

Now the king ordered those around him to take the youth away and cut his head off, but along the way the youth said, "Please, don't kill me. I am a king's son, and I have a lot of money with me. I'll give it all to you and be on my way. How is the king ever to know?" They agreed and took his money. The youth left the city and fled. How far he went nobody but God knows, but he came to a mountain cliff in which he found a cave. Since he had a sword and some arrows, he decided to venture into the cave. Once inside, he looked and saw a woman sitting there - a beautiful woman without equal. You'd say her neck was made of crystal, and if she had swallowed raisins, you could have seen them as they went down. As soon as the woman saw the youth, she started weeping. In astonishment the youth said, "Why are you weeping? I am a human being like you. Are you a prisoner here?"

"Yes," she said, "I am a prisoner here, but I am weeping for you because now the demon will come back, and if he sees you here he'll tear you to pieces."

"If you help me," said the youth, "I'll hide myself until the demon comes. You keep him occupied, and I'll kill him with this sword and rescue you."

"Fine," said the girl. "I'll do as you say. Go, hide yourself."

It wasn't long before the demon came, roaring and rumbling, into the cave. The girl stood in front of him and began to serve him. The demon was surprised and said, "Why is it that today you come before me? It's obvious you've got something up your sleeve."

"Inside this cave in the midst of the mountains, what could I be up to and what could I have up my sleeve?" she replied.

Then she flitted around the demon to distract it and make it turn its back on the youth. Then the youth attacked with his sword, and as he severed the demon's head from its body, something fell out of the demon's hands. The youth looked and saw that it was a box. He picked it up and took the lid off. Immediately two slaves stood before him and said, "What do you command?"

"Who are you?" he asked.

The slaves replied, "We are slaves of anyone who possesses the box, and we will do whatever he wants."

"Good," said the youth. "Now go into the box, and I'll tell you when I want you." Then he put the lid back on the box, put it in his pocket, and said to himself, "They will come in handy."

Then the youth said to the woman, "Now I have to go get the zay tree and the tay falcon. I don't know how long it will take me, and I don't know whether I'll come back or not. It's up to you: you can go or stay and wait for me here until I come back. I have freed you. Now it's your choice." "I will not leave here until you return," she said. "All my treasures and goods are here. I'll stay and wait for you."

The youth then bade her farewell and left. How far he went nobody but God knows, but he came to the outskirts of a city. When he got near the city gate, two guards stopped him and said, "We'll take you before the king. Every stranger who comes to our city has to go before the king. After the king questions him and he answers, either he is allowed to go or his head is cut off."

The youth said, "I am not going into your city, and I am not going before the king either. I am going to go on my way past here."

"You can't," they said. "You have just come." However, it was of little use. The youth would not submit. The news was taken to the king, and he dispatched five guards who said, "If you don't come we'll kill you!"

The youth stood his ground and fought with them. Invoking the name of God, he killed all five of them. Then a large army came out of the city to attack him. The youth took the box and removed the lid. Immediately the two slaves appeared before him and said, "What is your command?"

"Defeat this army for me!" he said. As soon as his order was spoken, the two black slaves fell upon the soldiers and laid them low left and right. Defeated, the army withdrew into the city. Helpless, the king sent a vizier and a wise man to the youth to find out what he wanted and to grant it in hopes that he would leave them alone.

"Of what religion are you?" the youth asked.

"We are fire-worshippers," they said.

"I am a Moslem," he said, "and if you will convert to Islam, I'll leave you alone." Thus the king became Moslem. And the people all followed him in converting to the religion of Islam. Then the king asked, "What are you looking for and what are you after?"

"I am after the zay tree and the tay falcon," the youth said.

"Who can reach them?" the people said in amazement. "They are surrounded by demons. But if you are determined to go, you will find them in such-and-such a country on such-and-such a mountain and such-and-such a place."

"My son," the king said, "let me send an army with you."

"Your majesty," the youth said, "that is not necessary. I'll go alone. Until now I haven't known the way."

Then he said good-bye and departed. How far he went only God knows, but with inquiry he came to the country in which the zay tree and tay falcon were. He searched for a long time until he came across a high mountain. There he took out the box and removed the lid. Immediately the two slaves stood before him, saying, "Master, what do you command?" "I command you to go to the city and find me a lot of pegs, a steel stake, and several hammers," he replied. The slaves disappeared, and in the twinkling of an eye they brought him what he needed. They hammered the stakes into

the mountain, and the youth scaled it. "Bring me a rope and lower me down," he said. The slaves immediately brought some rope and lowered away.

The youth looked and saw that it was a large palace. On every side horses were tied, and in front of them were placed bones so that they would constantly be hungry and neigh and keep the demons from going to sleep. In the same way there were many dogs tied up, and they had straw and barley so that they too would always be hungry and bark to keep the demon guards of the zay tree and tay falcon from going to sleep.

The youth took the bones from the horses and gave them to the dogs, and he took the hay and barley and gave them to the horses, and both the dogs and the horses fell silent and began eating. Then the youth saw that the door to the room where the zay tree and tay falcon were was hung with bells, and if he touched them they would fill the room with their jangling. Therefore he ordered the slaves to bring cotton, and he stuffed the bells with it.

Then, when he was convinced that all the demons were asleep and nothing would wake them, he reached out, opened the door, and went inside. He looked, and there lay the queen of the fairies asleep and covered with a silken curtain. The zay tree was placed to one side, and the tay falcon was perched atop, and it too was asleep. Next to the queen of the fairies were placed four lamps, one at her head, one at her feet, and one on their side. Then he changed the places of the lamps: those that were high he lowered and those that were low he raised. Then he looked carefully at her face. She shone like the full moon. He couldn't help himself. He kissed her, and immediately the place he had kissed become a blue spot on her cheek. Then he put the falcon in his pocket, picked up the tree, and was about to leave, but his legs wouldn't carry him. He returned to the queen of the fairies, raised the silk curtain, and looked. She had on a pair of trousers with forty knots. He untied thirty-nine of the knots, but the fortieth was tangled, and he couldn't untie it, so he left it as it was. Then he ordered the slaves to pull him up to top of the mountain, and from there he got down with the help of the stakes. Then he ordered the slaves to find horses, and like the wind they went to the cave where the girl was waiting. There he put down the zay tree and tay falcon and said, "I am going to be gone for a few days. Let these remain here in your keeping until I return," he said. "Then we can leave together."

The prince then went to the city where he had escaped death with such difficulty. Traversing the distance in a few days and nights, he came to the city gate, and there the guards stopped him and, just as before, took him before the king.

"My son," said the king, "where have you come from?"

"Your majesty," he replied, "I've come from a far distant country."

"Our custom in this city is to ask a few questions of every stranger who comes to our city," said the king. "If he answers correctly, we reward him. If a correct answer is not given, we cut his head off. Did you notice that tower? It has been made of the heads of such people."

"Fine," said the king. "In the behavior of living beings, does nature have precedence or nurture?"

"Your majesty," he answered, "Nature has precedence over nurture."

"No," said the king, "it is not so. Now I will prove to you that nurture comes before nature. I will have two cats come. They will each light a candle and twirl around this basin of water. Then they will put the candles out and take the basin down from its elevated place. Obviously their mothers and fathers have not taught them this." The youth asked the king for permission to be excused, and he went outside and ordered the slaves to bring him two mice, which he put in his pocket.

When he came back, the king rang a bell. It wasn't long before a door opened and two cats, each holding a candle, came in. They lit the candles and began turning around the basin of water. Straight-away the youth turned the mice loose, and as soon as the cats saw them, they left the candles and began chasing the mice.

"Your majesty," said the youth, "it happens that nature has precedence."

"Yes," said the king, "you are right, and you have won the wager. Now let me reward you."

"Of what might your reward consist, your majesty?" asked the youth.

"My reward is myself," he said, and there and then he flung off his regal garments and his head covering, and lo and behold he was a beautiful woman. "Now I'll marry you," she said.

The youth was stunned, but then said, "I'd kill you before I married you, because my two brothers were looking for the zay tree and tay falcon, and they must have come to this city and you must have killed them."

"Don't kill me just yet," she said, "for many people have escaped by paying money, unbeknownst to me." Then, at the king's command, all the prisons were searched, and it turned out that they had not been killed but were in chains. They were brought to their youngest brother, and all three rejoiced in the sight of each other.

Then the king said to his courtiers and to the people of the city, "Until now I have been your king and nobody knew I was a woman. Now I have decided to go with this youth, and you can choose a new king for your-slaves." All the people praised her for this.

Then they departed. Along the way the youth told them that he had found zay tree and tay falcon. Then they went to the cave, got the zay tree, the tay falcon, and the woman, and set out for their own country.

The two brothers were very disturbed by their youngest brother's fortune, and they were jealous. Along the way they spoke together, saying, "If we go like this, our youngest brother having done everything so courageously and heroically, we will be dishonored." Therefore they made a plot to kill their brother and each marry one of the two women. Then they would write to their father telling him they had obtained the zay tree and the tay falcon themselves.

Along the way, they stopped somewhere to rest, and then they said to the youngest brother, "Dear brother, let the women go ahead, and we'll follow them on our good horses and catch up with them. Just now we have some things to discuss amongst ourselves, and we don't want anyone else to hear us." The youngest brother, who was completely pure of heart and would not have conceived that after all the good things he had done for his brother they could harbor any rancor for him in their hearts, did

treacherously attacked him, stabbed him, and threw him into the river. Then they set out after the women.

Let us follow the fate of the youngest brother. His brothers had stabbed him and thrown him into the water, thinking he was dead, but he wasn't dead, for there was still a scant breath of life in him. As the blood trickled from his body, the water turned red and flowed downstream to a nearby mill. When the miller looked, he saw that the water was red, so he followed it upstream until he found the body drenched in blood lying in the water. He reached out, pulled him in, and looked. There was still a bit of life, so he took the youth home and tended to him. After a time the youth recovered and told the miller what had happened.

Now let us follow the brothers. When they caught up with the women, they asked them where their youngest brother was. "He's behind," they said, "but he'll be along in a while." After several nights and days of traveling, they reached their own city. They took the zay tree and the tay falcon to their father, but the falcon wouldn't sing. They then doubted whether they were the real zay tree and the tay falcon, so an astrologer was called in.

The astrologer examined them and said, "They are the real zay tree and tay falcon, but the tay falcon will only sing when the person who has caught it stands next to it. Therefore it is clear that the youngest brother found it, and these two brothers have tricked him and done away with him."

In the meanwhile, after the youth's wounds had healed, he decided not to leave but to stay and live with the miller because, after all his heroism and manliness, his brothers had been so cruel to him. Now let us go to the city of the fairies and find out what was going on there. When the queen of the fairies woke up after her forty-day and forty-night slumber, she looked around and saw that the zay tree and tay falcon were no longer there. Furthermore, the bones had been thrown to the dogs and the hay and barely had been put in front of the horses, and they were all eating silently. The queen got excited and angry and beat her demon and fairy sergeants, saying, "Fly into the sky and scour the earth from east to west, and find the zay tree and tay falcon for me. If you don't, I'll kill you!" And so the demons and fairies dispersed left and right and searched the earth until they discovered them in the city of the blind king.

The queen of the fairies wondered who had done it, but no one dared to own up to it and confess. "This can only have been done by a champion hero," said the queen of the fairies. "If only I could discover who did it, I would give him the best reward." Once this was known, lots of people claimed to have done it, but the queen of the fairies demanded proof, and no one had any. Like others, the king's two sons had been rejected. Word spread everywhere that the queen of the fairies had sent out a swarm after the zay tree and tay falcon and had come herself to reward the person who had taken them away. Therefore the youngest brother got up and went to his father's house, and as soon as he arrived the falcon began to sing and the father's eyes were healed. Putting his arm around his father's neck, he told him of his adventures, how he had obtained the zay tree and tay falcon and what this nasty brothers had done to him, that they had tried to kill him but God had not let it be done, and how the miller came to his rescue.

"My son," the father said, "the queen of the fairies has come, and she wants to reward the person who has done this deed, but she demands proof."

The youth went to the queen of the fairies and said, "I took the zay tree and the tay falcon."

"All right," she said, "what is your proof?"

"First I stuck a steel pole in the mountain, and then I got on it and let myself down with a rope. There I took the bones from the horses and gave them to the dogs, and I took the hay and barley from the dogs and gave them to a horses. I stuffed the bells on the door with cotton, and then I went in. I changed the lamps on all four sides of you, and I kissed you on the cheek, which became a blue mark. Then I took the tay falcon, which was asleep on the zay tree, and put it under my arm, and I picked up the tree and made off with them."

Then she freed all the demons, saying, "You are free to go where you will. I remain here as this youth's wife."

Then the youth sent for his brother and said, "I didn't have to say that I performed the task by myself, and I could have married each of you to one of the women, but you acted shamefully and did me a great wrong. Now, for my father's sake, and for the sake of the viziers and counselors, I forgive you. Each of you may marry one of the women."

They lowered their heads in shame. Later the youngest brother married the queen of the fairies, and they all lived happily ever after.

## **Hisayn the Water Carrier**

They say once, a long time ago, there was a porter whose job it was to carry water. He had been married for a long time, but he didn't have any children. His wife went to many sheikhs and mullas, consulted many holy men, and took lots of medicine, and in the end she got pregnant.

One day the husband said to his wife, "Woman, life consists of dying and being born. Let me make my will for you, for no one has yet died from making a will. However, this is the world. If it should happen that I die, when you give birth and if it

is a girl, I have this golden goblet, and you can make his living for himself, if he asks you, 'Mother, what did my father do for a living, and what did he leave me?' you will tell him, 'My son, your father left nothing more than this goblet and this pot.' "

The man made this will, and three days later God's command was done and he died. After nine months and nine days the wife gave birth to a boy she named Hisayn. Then she put the pot and goblet in a chest and closed it shut until he should come into his own.

Years came and went, and the boy grew up. One day he was playing among some children, and during a quarrel a boy said, "Go away! No one knows who you are or who your father was or what he did."

The boy was distraught and went weeping to his mother to tell her of the boy's taunts. "Dear son," she said, "don't be sad, your father was a poor man, and his job was to carry water to houses, and with what he got at that job he made us a living. He left you this golden goblet and pot." Thus the boy took up his father's trade, and from morning till night he carried water through the lanes and streets of the city, and he and his mother lived from the proceeds.

Once the king of the east came to that city, and the boy went to the headman of the king's caravan in hopes of selling clean water. When the king's eyes fell upon Hisayn the water carrier, he saw a well-turned-out and handsome youth. Taking a fancy to him, the king said, "My son, what is your name, and who are your people? How much do you make a day in this job of yours?"

He bowed respectfully to the king and said, "Your Majesty, my name is Hisayn the water carrier, and I have nobody other than an aged mother." And he told him how much he made in a day.

"Well," said the king, "I will give twice as much and that much again to your mother if you will come with me to my country and be my son. I have no sons - just a single daughter."

Hisayn the water carrier replied, "Your Majesty, I must ask my mother and see what she says."

Then he went to his mother and explained the situation to her. "My son," she said, "this is a bounty God has sent. By all means go, and farewell."

Then the king gave the mother a fine reward and took the boy with him. The boy put on the clothes and raiment of a prince, and learned the ways and customs of the king's court. One day he had gone into the garden in the king's house when he looked and saw a beauty that would take your breath away. The boy immediately fell madly in love with the girl, and he fainted on the spot. In the same way the girl, who was the king's daughter, fell so madly in love with the boy that she had no rest.

After a while it happened that the king fell seriously ill. He consulted many physicians, but no remedy could be found. The king's daughter secretly gave lots of money to all the physicians and astrologers and told them to tell her father that he wouldn't get well unless he sold his daughter. For a time the king refused to submit to such shameful advice, and he endured his pain and agony. Later, however, when the illness got worse, he was forced to submit to the physicians' and astrologers' advice,

so he turned to his daughter and said, "My daughter, this is how things are. Do you agree or not?"

"Father," she said, "I submit willingly."

Then the girl went to Hisayn the water carrier and said to him, "When I am auctioned off, no matter how much anyone bids, you bid more. Don't worry: I'll take care of the money."

And thus Hisayn the water carrier became possessed of the girl, and the doctors treated the king's illness and made him well. Hisayn the water carrier out the girl's plan: he had a wooden chest made, and he nailed it shut and covered it with tar, and he put a thick top on it.

Then the king's daughter went inside the chest and shut the top over herself. The boy carried the chest to the caravansaray and gave it to the caravan leader who was going to his country, and he said to the leader, "These are a few goods and gifts, and gifts. Deliver them to my mother." Then he gave them a good wage, and they delivered it after a few days. The boy's old mother's job was to go out of the house early every morning and gather brush in the fields and valleys, and in the evening she bundled it up, hoisted it on her back, and came into town, where she sold it.

When she received the chest, she put it in a corner of the house. When the old woman went out, the king's daughter opened the lid of the chest, cleaned the house, fixed a meal, ate some herself, and left a portion for the old woman. When the old woman returned, the girl went back into the chest and closed the lid over herself. The old woman was amazed at what had been done and said to herself, "What do you think? Is this the work of a fairy, a human being, or what?" Then she hid herself for a day or two and didn't go out to collect brush. When the girl came out of the chest she seized her and said, "What are you? Are you a demon or a human? And what are you doing in my house?"

"I am the daughter of the king of the east," she replied, "and now I am your daughter-in-law, and your son has sent me to you until he comes back, for we have been married."

Then the daughter-in-law said to her mother-in-law, "You have a house built for us with seven doors, each of which should open onto a lane or street. I have brought lots of money and baubles with me, and as long as I can I will pay for food for the poor and unfortunate as alms for my husband's safety until he returns to us in good health." In this manner the girl built a large palace with seven doors, and from all directions the people came there, and her fame spread in all directions.

Once the son of the king of the city and the son of the king's vizier said, "Let's go there too and get something to eat. Maybe we can see that girl and get hold of her." When the king's son and the vizier's son went to the reception hall and had something to eat, they got themselves in through the back and hid until there were no more people around. Then they said, "We are in love with this girl, and we won't go until we do what we want with her." The girl said to a servant, "Go empty my chamber pot into the cesspool."

Then she came out smiling and welcomed them, but secretly she put a sleeping potion into their tea before handing it to them. When they lost consciousness, she had

them thrown into the cesspool. They remained unconscious there all that night. When they awoke in the morning and saw what a state they were in, they decided to take revenge for such an indignity. Therefore they wrote a letter to Hisayn the water carrier. In it they wrote every lie, falsehood, and slander they could think of about his wife.

When the letter reached Hisayn the water carrier, he flew into a rage and, without asking for permission, he flew from the house of the girl's father - which was the king's house, of course - and after a few days he arrived in his own city. He hid himself outside the city and waited until it was dark, when he stole into the house, and there he saw his wife on one side and his mother on the other, both asleep. Without any hesitation he drew his dagger, attacked his wife, stabbed her in the head, and tossed her into the street with all her clothes and finery.

The next morning, when his mother woke up and was welcoming her son home with great joy, she asked where his wife was. "I killed her," he replied as he told her about the letter. The mother burst into tears and explained the affair from the beginning, how it was nothing but slanderous falsehood. Hisayn the water carrier was dumbfounded with regret and combed the street in order to bring his wife's body back, but there was no trace of her.

In the meantime, after Hisayn the water carrier had stabbed her and thrown her body into the street, a woodcutter had passed by just before dawn. He looked and saw a beautiful woman with so much jewelry and ornaments, covered in blood and moaning. He immediately put her on the back of his mule, took her home, and brought a physician.

After a time she recovered, and the man said to her, "My girl, if you are agreeable, I'll make you my daughter, and I'll be your father."

The girl was very grateful to him for his good deed, so she said, "As long as I live I'll never be able to repay your kindness."

One day the girl was standing on the roof of the house when suddenly a demon disguised as a beggar came and asked her for something, saying, "Perhaps you'll give me a piece of bread." The girl jokingly said, "Where would I get bread from? Why don't you take me instead?"

No sooner were these words out of her mouth than the demon sprouted wings, put her on his back, and flew off. He carried her far, far away until they reached a valley, where he put her down and said, "You sit here while I go find some food, but don't go anywhere or I'll get you again and tear you to pieces."

When the demon was gone, the girl ran away as fast as her legs would carry her. She kept on going for a long time until she came to a mill. Entering, she said to the miller, "A demon has flown away with me." The miller hid her somewhere in the building. When the demon came back and looked for her, the girl was nowhere to be found. Therefore the demon began to jump around and search everywhere until he came to the mill and asked the miller if he knew where the girl was. "I haven't seen anybody," he answered, "and nobody has come here." The demon went away from the mill, and then he dropped dead of grief.

"My daughter," the miller said to the girl, "We are an old man and old woman, and we have no children. Come, be our daughter, and we will honor you." The girl thanked him very much and said, "I accept you as my father, and as long as I live I will never be able to repay your kindness." Thus the girl remained with the miller and his wife.

One day the king's son went out hunting and chanced upon the mill. No sooner did he spy her than he fell madly in love with her. When he returned home he was so stricken with grief and sadness that he couldn't eat or sleep. "My son," his father said, "what has made you like this? Why are you so sad? Tell me what you want and I'll get it for you straightaway. If it's a matter of love, and it's the daughter of some king, vizier, or noble you want, name her and she's yours."

The boy perked up a bit and said, "Father, it is the daughter of a miller I want. If you get her for me, well and good. If you don't get her for me, I'll go away forever."

It was of little use for the father to say, "My son, we are king and prince, you and I. How can we be companions of a miller and a miller's daughter?"

"As God is one and only one," replied the son, "I want only her!"

There was little the king could do but go to the miller and ask for his daughter. The miller explained this to the girl, and she said, "Father, buy me a mare, a suit of men's clothes, and a sword, and that's all ask of you."

The miller granted her request, and the girl put on men's clothes, took the sword, mounted the mare, said her good-byes to the miller and his wife, and left. Since she was intelligent and clever, she also took a bottle of sleeping potion with her.

She traveled for a long time, and she chanced upon forty thieves. The thieves muttered among themselves, saying, "By God a fine prey has fallen onto our hands." The girl heard this and said, "Brothers, I too am a thief. Don't kill me. You are forty, and I'll join you to make forty-one." They agreed, and they all set out together until they came to a mountain and they entered a cave. When they looked at her closely they realized she was a girl, and therefore each one of them had designs on her in his heart. The girl got up to bring them some food, and secretly she put the sleeping potion in the food. When the thieves ate it, they all fell down unconscious.

Then the girl arose, took all their swords, set their horses free, and left. For a long time she traveled until she came to a city. It turned out that the king of the city had died, and the people had gathered to let a falcon choose a new king. She went to the edge of the city and stood far away from the people. The falcon was set loose, and it circled around and suddenly alighted on the head of the girl (who was wearing men's clothing). The people said, "This man is a stranger and is not of this city. The falcon has made a mistake." In short, the falcon was made to fly three times, and all three times it alighted on her head. Thus they put the crown on her head and seated her on the throne.

The king gave the courtiers a picture of a very beautiful girl (which was actually a picture of herself) and commanded that it be hung in the city square with special guards to watch in secret. If anyone stood next to it and sighed, they were to seize him immediately and take him to the king.

Let's go to Hisayn the water carrier, the king's son, the vizier's son, the woodcutter, and the forty thieves and see what happened to them. Having fallen madly in love with the girl, they had taken up beggar's bowls and staffs and become madmen wandering from city to city and country to country in search of her. Each of them chanced to come to this city, where they saw her picture in the city square and sighed in hopelessness. The guards seized them and took them to the king's court. The king commanded that each of them be taken to a separate room and served well until their time should come. When all the people the king was after had been taken, he ordered them brought to him. He turned to them and said, "Tell me the truth. In search of what are you wandering? Whom are you looking for? Tell me what you need and I'll give it to you immediately, but by God if you don't tell me the truth, I'll cut your heads off one by one!"

First Hisayn the water carrier, whose hair and beard had grown long came before the king and said, "Long live your majesty. I, in such and such a way, was married to the daughter of the king of the east. Because of the slander of the king's son and the vizier's son I killed her with my own hands, but my mother told me the truth, so now you see me wandering from city to city looking for her. She may be still alive because, after I repented of my act, I couldn't find her body. I suspect that she may not have died of her wounds and somebody may have taken her away and made her well. Now in this city of yours I saw a picture of a woman that looks exactly like her, and the fire of my love was immediately rekindled." Then, one after the other, they told her of their adventures and why they were wandering in search of her.

In the end, the king ordered the king's son, the vizier's son, and the forty thieves to be beheaded. She made the woodcutter her right-hand vizier and the miller her left-hand vizier. Then she went to Hisayn the water carrier, took off her headband and covering, and showed herself to him openly, and she presented him with the royal crown and throne. And they lived happily ever after.

## **King Ahmad**

They say that once upon a time there was a king who had on only son named Ahmad. When the boy grew up and matured, he asked his father to get him a good horse.

"My son," the father said, "there is the herd of horses. Go among them and pick out the one you want."

The youth went into the herd and put his hand on the back of every horse, and soon one mare lowered its back. The youth went to his father and told him what had happened. "My son," he said, "this mare must be pregnant. When it is time for it to give birth, it will go to the edge of the sea and drop the colt in the water. Therefore you must take a shawl. When the colt is born, grab it by the hind legs and don't let it fall into the water." In this way the boy brought the merhorse mare's colt home and cared for it until it could feed itself on its own.

The king's wife, who was the boy's stepmother, had been mad for the boy for a while and wanted to sleep with him. Once she sent an invitation to the boy. The merhorse colt laughed and said, "You'd better not do as that woman says. Whenever I laugh, you stand your ground and refuse to let yourself fall into her hands." When the boy went to the woman and she made clear to him what she wanted, the boy immediately jumped up. The woman grabbed him from behind. But it was useless.

Next the woman went to her husband and told him that Ahmad had made advances to her. The king sent for his vizier and explained the situation.

The vizier said, "You majesty, if your wife has ripped his clothing from behind, then it is her doing; if she has ripped his clothing from the front, then it is your son's doing." It therefore came to light that it was the wife's plan.

The next day the wife again invited the youth, and once again the merhorse colt laughed and said, "Ahmad, you'd better not sit down on her bed. That woman has had a dervish put a serpent under the bed so that when you sit down; it will bite you and kill you. The youth food, however, is all right and nothing has been done to it." The youth went, but he only ate and then left.

One the third day the woman put poison in the food and then sent for the youth. The merhorse colt laughed again and said, "You'd better not eat the food. She has poisoned it, and it will kill you on the spot. Take a puppy with you." The youth took a puppy with him. When he gave the puppy a bit of food, the puppy immediately curled up and died.

One the following day the woman had a pit forty yards deep dug under the youth's place on the rug, and at the bottom of the pit she stuck a poisoned stake. Then she sent for the youth. The merhorse colt laughed and explained the situation to him, and so the youth was saved.

Then woman gave a lot of money to a physician and connived with him that she would pretend to be ill and the physician would say, "If she doesn't eat the meat of merhorse colts. She won't get well." In this way the woman pretended to be ill, and the king sent for the physician. After examining her, he advised her to eat merhorse colt meat or else she wouldn't recover. The king sent for Ahmad and said, "Son, do you love your stepmother or the merhorse colt more?"

"Father," he replied, "I wouldn't exchange my stepmother for a thousand merhorse colts. I'll cut its head off, but first let me ride it a while and take a turn on it." As soon as Ahmad mounted, the merhorse colt sprouted wings and flew away with him until it reached the edge of a sea.

Along the way the youth's eyes fell upon a beautiful feather, and the more he looked at it the more beautiful and shiny it appeared. "Ahmad," said the merhorse colt, "don't get off. This feather will cause us trouble." It was no use. Ahmad wanted it, and so he took it.

Then, after much traveling, they reached a city, on the outskirts of which they took up residence in a house. Some time passed, and the city was filled with murmurings of a handsome youth who had come with a beautiful feather on his head, and he looked for all the world like a prince.

This talk reached the ears of the king of the city, and he ordered that the youth be brought to him. Since he was very mannerly and aristocratic, the king made him his vizier. The king's other viziers, however, were all foreigners and therefore they became implacably jealous rivals. One day in the king's court there was talk of the feather, and the viziers said, "What can the owner of a feather of such colors be like? Your majesty, if this youth could find this feather, he could certainly get hold of its owner." And thus, hoping that Ahmad would disappear and not dislodge them from their places, they created a desire in the king to find the owner of the feather. The king pleaded with the youth to find him. No matter how often he said that he had just found it on the road, it was of no use.

Therefore he went to the merhorse colt and said, "I beg of you, find some way for me to do this."

"Stop worrying," said the colt. "You'll give us headache. If this is how it is, go to the king and say, "I want a camel with a load of grain."

Thus Ahmad, mounted on the merhorse colt, drove the camel with its load before him and departed. He was on the road for a long time before he reached a place where the merhorse said, "Ahmad, I'm going to stop here. I'm not going any further. You go to that haystack and cut the camel's head off. Then spread grain around it. Then cut the camel's stomach open and get inside. All the birds in the world will come flocking to the grain, and around noon the king of the birds will come to peck at the grain. Then you will pronounce the name of God and the Prophet, reach out and grab it by the leg and don't let go. Be careful not to open your eyes, for if you do the birds will pluck your eyes out."

By means of this plan Ahmad caught the king of the birds, put him in a cage, and took him to the king, and the bird king sang the most beautiful song two or three times a day. Ahmad then became that much the more dear to the king, and the viziers, suffering in agony, started plotting again. Every day at the king's court they talked so much about the great beauty of the daughter of the king of the fairies that the king fell in love with her and yearned to find out how to get hold of her. In order to find a solution that would involve Ahmad, they duped the king by saying, "Your majesty, if this youth can bring you the king of the birds, he can certainly get hold of the

daughter of the king of the fairies for you." They kept on repeating these words into the king's ear until he agreed and sent for Ahmad.

"Ahmad," he said, "this time you must go bring me the daughter of the king of the fairies, for if you can't do it, nobody can."

"Your majesty," Ahmad objected, "this is not within my capability."

But it was of no use, for the king said, "Ahmad, if you were able to find the king of the birds for me, you can bring me the daughter of the king of the fairies. If you don't, I'll have you beheaded." Dejected, Ahmad went to the merhorse colt and explained the situation. "Didn't I tell you not to take the feather because it would bring us bad luck?" said the merhorse colt. "Now the only thing you can do is to go say to the king, 'Let them get our things ready for a journey, and we'll go.'"

Ahmad jumped on the colt's back, and it took off like the wind. No one but God knows how far they went before they came to a place where there was a castle on top of a hill. The colt said, "Ahmad, you're in luck. Just now the daughter of the king of the fairies is asleep for forty days and forty nights in that castle. She is sleeping on her right side, and in the draw string of her trousers there are forty knots. Anyone who can untie those forty knots will be married to her - lock, stock, and barrel. Come on, my luck be with you, for she can squash you with her elbow."

"With God's permission I will go," said Ahmad. And away he went, He untied all forty knots, and when he girl woke up she said in amazement, "How did you do this? A bird came and broke my wing."

"By God," said Ahmad, "whether you like it or not, I did it."

There was nothing the daughter of the king of the fairies could say but, "If that is so, then I am married to you - lock, stock, and barrel." Then she gathered together all her treasures and jewels, got on behind Ahmad and off they went to the king.

"A tent will have to be pitched for me outside the city," said the daughter of the king of the fairies, "because I can't be married to the king for forty days."

During that time the king could not rest and he pined away and died. Ahmad then became the king, and he took the daughter of the king of the fairies as his wife. After a while king Ahmad yearned for his father, and he ordered that provisions for a campaign be made. Off he went near his father's city, and there he pitched his tent. The vizier ran to the king and said, "Your majesty, what are we to do? A foreign army has besieged the city." The king had gone blind in both eyes crying over the loss of his son, and his wife, who had unjustly caused the youth to be exiled, had caught leprosy. The king said, "Let the foreign army occupy the city. What do I care? I am blind, and my wife is a leper."

Then the youth came before his father and said, "Your majesty, who do you have, and why are you like this?" The king explained the loss of his son and said, "My son, here is they key to the city. You be my successor. I will never see my own son again, and that is why you find me so low and miserable."

"Father," said Ahmad gleefully, "I am your own son." Then he told him of his adventure during his exile. The father's eyes at once were healed, and father and son rejoiced. And the stepmother who had falsely accused the youth got her just deserts.

## The Weaver's Son

They say that in the time of sultan Mahmud, there was a weaver in a village. He had a very beautiful and lovely daughter. Once sultan Mahmud and Ayaz, his vizier, put on dervish clothes and started roaming around the kingdom. One day they happened upon the weaver's house. The weaver, without recognizing them, came out to greet them and was hospitable to them. When sultan Mahmud saw the girl, he fell head over heels in love with her and said to his vizier, "I'm going out aide on some pretext. While I'm gone, you ask for the girl on my behalf." The vizier asked the father for the girl, and in reply he said, "My daughter's arrangements for marriage are in her own hands. If she agrees, I'll agree too."

The girl was then asked her opinion, and she agreed. The sultan gave the girl's father a lot of money, the marriage was performed, and he took her to wife. Three days later the dervish (who was really sultan Mahmud) said to his wife, "wife, you know I am a wanderer, and I stay in a different place every day. I'll give you this golden armband. If you get pregnant and produce a son, put this on his arm. If it is a girl, sell it and spend the proceeds on her."

After saying this, the sultan bid them farewell and returned to his city, and he never had any contact with his wife again. The wife remained in her father's house, and after nine months and nine days she gave birth to a son. The boy grew, and when he was ten or twelve years old and was playing with the children in the neighborhood one day, they taunted him, saying that no one knew who his father was.

The boy was very upset by this and pleaded with his mother to tell him who his father was. His mother tried to outsmart him by telling him that her own father was

his father, but he didn't fall for it and insisted she tell him the truth. Finally she gave in and said, "My son, your father was a wandering dervish, and after only three days he left me. I don't know where he went or what happened to him. All he left was this golden armband for me to place on your arm." When the boy heard this, he said, "This is no longer my place. I must go." No matter how hard his mother wept and wailed, it was to no avail. Reluctantly she put the band on his arm, and the boy bade her farewell and left.

He headed toward sultan Mahmud's city. He was so handsome that everyone in the city looked at him. As he passed by the door of a halva shop, the halva maker called out to him, saying, "It's obvious you've come to this city as stranger."

"That's right," the boy replied. "I know nobody here."

Then the halva maker said, "That's all right. Come, by my son."

This pleased the boy, and he thanked the halva maker very much.

When they went home together, the halva maker's wife was inflamed with love for the boy and desired him. The boy couldn't even look at his benefactor's wife in an impure fashion, so somehow he persuaded the halva maker to let him sleep in the shop and not go home with him. However, now the halva maker's shop became an object of curiosity on account of the boy's good looks, and there was always a crowd.

One day the vizier's daughter sent her servant to buy some halva, and when she arrived, the people let her through. The servant was so struck by the boy's beauty that she just stood there and did not return home. The vizier's daughter sent another servant. That one did not come back either.

To herself the lady said, "Neither one of them has come back. Let me go myself and find out what's going on."

When she arrived there and saw the halva maker's boy, she fell madly in love with him. To the halva maker she said, "I'm going home. You must send this boy to bring me a tray of halva." The lady and her servants went home, and it wasn't long before the halva maker's boy was shown in carrying a tray. The girl took him to a room, sent the servants away, and said, "Listen. I am the daughter of the vizier, and you must do what I say. I want to lie with you and fun. If you agree, fine. If you don't, I'll make you wish you had."

The boy had choice. He began giving her enjoyment, and this became something they did every day. So that it wouldn't become known, the vizier's daughter in secret had a well digger brought in, to dig a tunnel between her room and the back room of the halva maker's shop where the boy slept at night. At that end, the boy hid the entrance to the tunnel with a plank covered with a rug, and he made a secret trap door.

Every night the lady sent a servant, and the boy went and had fun with her until dawn.

Once Sultan Mahmud issued a command that no one was to go out at night and no house was to light a lamp. That night the sultan disguised himself with dervish clothes and went out roaming around the city. From after he spied a glimmer in the halva maker's shop. He went and knocked on the door, and the boy opened it. The "dervish" begged him to take him in and give him shelter for the night because he

was a stranger and didn't know anyone in town. If not, the sultan's night watchmen would arrest him and throw him in jail.

The boy asked him in and took him back to his room. It was not long before a knocking came from under the plank, and a servant said, "My lady says come."

"Tell your lady I have a guest tonight," the boy said.

A little while passed, and the servant came back and said, "My lady says both you and your guest are to come."

The "dervish" was surprised by this, and asked, "What's going on?" "Don't worry," the boy said. "Come with me."

So both of them went through the tunnel until they reached the vizier's house. The girl embraced the halva maker's boy, and they enjoyed themselves in front of the "dervish" until it was morning. (The vizier had promised to give his daughter to the sultan, and the marriage was not far off.) At dawn the boy and the "dervish" went back through the tunnel.

That morning the sultan again commanded that no one was to go out that night and no one was to light a lamp. That night the sultan, Ayaz, and Hasan Maymandi the vizier, who was the girl's father, put on dervish clothes and went out wandering around the city.

The sultan took them to the halva maker's shop. They looked and saw a light burning inside. They knocked on the door, and the boy opened it for them.

All three of them began begging him to give them shelter for the night or else the sultan's night watchmen would arrest them. The boy took them back to his room, and it wasn't long before a knocking came from under the plank and a woman's voice said, "My lady says come."

"Tell her I have three guests," the boy said.

After a short while the lady sent a replay, saying, "Come and bring your three guests with you."

All three of them followed the boy through the tunnel. When they arrived, Hasan Maymandi looked and saw that it was his own house. He was about to reveal himself, but the sultan wouldn't let him and threatened him, saying that no matter what happened, no one should discover them. As before, the girl greeted the boy by embracing him, and in front of all three of them she enjoyed herself with the boy. Hasan Maymandi was about to go mad. He wanted to draw his sword and chop them to pieces on the spot, but again the sultan wouldn't let him. Thus the vizier's daughter enjoyed herself with the boy that night in front of her father, Ayaz, and Sultan Mahmud without recognizing them.

The next morning Sultan Mahmud decided to go hunting with Ayaz and his retinue for forty days so that his worry might subside somewhat. Therefore he entrusted everything to his vizier Hasan Maymandi and said to him, "Until I come back, I don't want the halva maker's boy bothered for any reason." But no matter how much the sultan supported him, the vizier, who was about to die from grief, couldn't control himself and issued an order for the halva maker's boy to be arrested and taken to the foot of the gallows. Then he had a proclamation made throughout the city that all the people were to come on a certain day, when the halva maker's boy would be hanged.

That day all the citizens crowded into the big field outside the city, where the gallows had been set up for the halva maker's boy. Returning from the hunt, the sultan and his retinue saw crowd from afar and hastened to town. The sultan looked, and there was halva maker's boy stripped naked and being taken to the foot of the gallows. When his eye fell upon the golden armband, he recognized it and immediately knew that this was his son. He ordered him dressed in fine clothes, and to Hasan Maymandi he said, "Didn't I tell you not to bother him? This is my own son. Look at his armband."

And then and there he issued a command that the vizier's daughter and the boy be married. The wedding was celebrated for seven days and seven nights.

Afterwards the sultan sent for the weaver and the boy's mother, and they all lived happily ever after.

## The King and Fate

They say that long ago there was a king. His wife died and left him with a son and a daughter. The king decided not to marry again so that his children would not be subjected to a stepmother.

Years came and years went. The son and daughter grew up, and the king decided to go on the pilgrimage. The king had complete trust in his vizier, and therefore he summoned him and said, "I'm going on the pilgrimage, and I'm taking my son with me, but I am going to entrust my daughter to your safekeeping."

"Your Majesty," the vizier said, "your daughter will be like my own. You go, and Godspeed."

All provision for the king's journey were made, and he set out with his retinue and escort. The king's daughter remained in the palace, and she never went out of her room. A few days passed. The vizier had a desire for her, and one day he attacked her in secret and said, "I want you to lie with me. If you don't agree to do it, I'll come up with a plan that will make your father cut your head off!"

"Vizier," the girl said, "you are in my father's place. Why are you saying these things? My father has entrusted me to you for safekeeping,"

These words had no effect on the vizier, who kept insisting. There was nothing the girl could do but force him out, and she never again allowed him to come there. After the king made the pilgrimage and returned home, the vizier and all the people of the town went out to greet him. When the vizier came before the king and kissed his hand, the king asked, "Vizier, how is my daughter? During my absence have you taken good care of her and watched over her?"

With feigned reluctance the vizier replied, "Your Majesty, what can I say? This daughter of yours wouldn't heed me, and she indulged in all sorts of lasciviousness, turning her house into a house of ill repute to which all and sundry had access."

Hearing these words, the king went mad with anger and, on the spot, ordered his son to take his sister far from town, cut her head off, and bring her blood-drenched clothes back because the king did not want to lay eyes on his evil daughter. Although the prince knew that his sister was pure and had not done any such thing, there was nothing he could do but obey his father's order. He went to his sister and explained the situation to her.

Weeping, the girl followed her brother out of town. They went far from town. When they came to a spring, the brother said, "My good sister, I know you are purer than a rose petal. Therefore I am not going to kill you. I'm going to set you free here. Go wherever you like." Then the prince cut off a chicken's head, sprinkled the blood over his sister's clothes, and took them to his father so that he would be convinced that his daughter's head had been cut off.

Now the poor girl, left all alone, traversed field and plain, traveling several days and nights, and her clothing was ripped and shredded by thistles and thorns. One evening she went into a patch of wild straw berries to rest. The next morning, by chance, a prince arrived with a lot of dogs to hunt. When the dogs got near the patch of strawberries, they started yelping and baying. "There must be something here," the prince said to himself. When he went forward, he looked and saw a beautiful young woman curled up, but she was wearing torn and tattered clothes. "What are you?" he asked. "Are you a demon? a fairy? a human being? or what?"

"By God," she answered, "I'm not a demon or a fairy. I am a poor wandering woman, and I want to find work with some decent person and make my living."

The prince took the cloak from his back and gave it to her. She put it around her shoulders and came out of the strawberry patch. The prince seated her behind him on his horse, and took her home. There she was dressed in fine clothes, and in no time she began working in the house.

After a time, it became clear to all that she was a fine and intelligent woman, and her bearing was that of the daughter of a great household. When the girl's nobility and purity were apparent in all respects, the prince said to his father, "I want you to marry me to this girl. Although she is a servant in our house, she is an intelligent and educated woman."

The father approved heartily, and he married the girl to his son. After a year God gave her a son and she became even more beloved. After that, she divulged her secret to her husband, saying, "I too am the daughter of a king, but I exiled myself on account of a tragedy. Now I'd like you to take me to my father's house because I think of my people often, and I don't have any news of them."

After obtaining his father's permission, the prince made all the necessary provisions for the journey. He got several horsemen ready, entrusted his wife and child to a trusted friend of his, and said, "You go to such-and-such a place and camp there. I'll join you in a few days, and together we'll go to the house of my wife's father."

The prince's wife's caravan set forth and traveled for a long time. In the evening they stopped in a plain. The servants rushed to set up the princess's tent and get it ready for her to rest. At midnight the man who was the prince's trusted friend into whose hands the princess had been entrusted, sneaked into the princess's tent and said, "From the time you came to work in the king's house I have been smitten with love for you. Now I want you to lie with me."

Now matter how much she pleaded, the man insisted, saying, "If you don't give yourself to me, I'll kill your infant child." The woman could not bring herself to do it, and she refused to yield. The man killed her son and threatened to kill her too. "All right," she said, "I agree, but only on condition that you let me go outside first to wash my hands."

The man agreed. No sooner was she outside than she started running as fast as she could. Some time passed and the woman did not come back. The man went outside and searched this way and that. Neither could he find any trace of her nor did he know in which direction she had gone. Then, despondent, he went to his own tent and tossed and turned in his bed all night. In the morning the prince arrived and asked about his wife and child. "Wife and child?" the man replied. "That wife of yours turned out to be a demon. She cut off her own child's head, and no one knows in which direction she went."

The prince began to entertain suspicions about this man he had trusted. "Don't lie to me," he said. "You had something to do with this. Get out of my sight. I won't kill you, but don't let me ever see you again. Get out, you filthy cur!"

The man left the country. The prince continued on his journey with bitterness, but he sent the horsemen back to town, saying, "Tell my father that I have a job to do and won't return soon." In this way he too left his country.

Let's return to the adventures of the woman. The night she escaped from the clutches of the man, she did not stop until morning. The next day she came across a farmer working in a field. She went to him, greeted him, and said, "Uncle Farmer, I have a request to make of you. Perhaps you could give me your clothes, and in return I'll give you all the finery and jewels I have."

The farmer answered, "My daughter, I'll give you my clothes, but I don't want anything from you. It's obvious something is wrong. Go, and God be with you. My own troubles are enough for me."

The woman put on the farmer's clothes and tried up her hair. Then, after hiding her finery in a bundle, she set off. How far she went no one but God knows, but she came to her father's own city. Then she went to her father's house and knocked on the door. The servants came out and asked, "What do you want, brother? Why have you come here?"

"I'm a poor lad," she said, "and ever since I was a child I have worked as a tea maker in the reception halls of kings and nobles. I've come thinking there might be work for me."

This was relayed to the king, and he ordered the lad brought in. After welcoming him and asking a few questions, the king made the lad the tea maker at his court. He was a really good worker and pleased the king highly.

Some time passed. One day a man came to the king's door and said, "I have curried horses for kings and nobles since I was a child. Perhaps you could hire me a groom." The girl, who no one knew was a girl, was watching, and she recognized him as the man who had tried to rape her and who had cut off her child's head. She said nothing and kept it to herself.

Again some time passed. One day the people looked out, and there at the king's door was a dervish with a long beard beating a drum and singing, and people were giving him money. The woman recognized him as her husband, but he seemed to have gone crazy. She asked the king to bring the dervish into court to play the drum and sing. The king, who had become very fond of his tea maker, didn't want to refuse a request, so he ordered that the dervish be summoned inside, and then he invited him to remain at court. The dervish said, "Your Majesty, I couldn't accept even if you put me in your own place. I have a problem and don't know how to cope with it."

"No matter what you do," the king said, "stay here with us for a while. After that, you can go wherever you like and Godspeed." In this way, the dervish accepted and stayed there.

Now it was the custom at the king's court for somebody to tell a tale, or a story, or an adventure every night. "Your Majesty," the tea maker said, "I'm ready to tell a tale, but I have a condition."

"Let me hear what your condition is," said the king.

"Here's my condition," he said. "When I start telling my story, I don't want anyone to leave for any reason until I finish. So anyone who has to go to the bathroom let him do it now. After that, the door must be locked and the key put in my hand."

The king agreed to this condition, and the tea maker started telling his story. "Your Majesty," he said, "they say that once upon a time there was a king whose wife died, and he was left with a son and a daughter. The king did not marry again, and the boy and girl grew up. Then the king went on the pilgrimage, taking his son with him, and he placed his daughter in the keeping of his vizier. After the king departed, the vizier desired the girl and wanted to rape her, but the king's daughter escaped."

At this point the king pricked up his ears and said, "Be quick, my son, and tell the end. This is just like something that happened to me."

The tea maker said, "King, this is a story. Listen and you'll find out what the end is." Then he continued and said, "When the king returned from the pilgrimage, the vizier went out to greet him and slandered the girl. The king ordered his son to go take his sister far from town and cut her head off."

Here the vizier began to squirm, saying, "King, give me permission to go. I need to go to the bathroom."

"I stipulated that no one could go out," the tea maker said.

At once the vizier began to tremble with fear. The tea maker continued telling his story, saying, "Now, my king, the brother took his sister out of town, and there he let her go and did not kill her. The girl traveled, and in the state she was in she was discovered by a prince while he was hunting. He took her home and married her, and after nine months and nine days she had a son. Now the woman remembered her father's house and explained to her husband how she had been driven from home. The

husband compassionately arranged a trip and set her on the road with a retinue and escort after having entrusted her and the babe to a man he trusted and believed in, saying that he would join them in a few days. But that man wanted to do unspeakable things to her, and in order to make his threats felt, he killed the child. The woman managed by trickery to escape and run away."

Now the dervish shuddered. The groom, showing fear and dread, wanted to go outside, but, just as with the vizier, the tea maker would not let him go and kept on telling his story. "Your Majesty, the woman traversed field and plain that night, and in the morning she came across a farmer. She took his clothes and put them on, and then she went to her father's court, where she became the king's tea maker without anyone recognizing her."

The king was overcome with grief, as his head spun as a result of this story. The tea maker took off his turban, and abundant long hair spilled out. "Father," she said, "I am your daughter, and that dervish is my husband. That groom is the traitor to my husband who killed my infant son, and this is the vizier who slandered me."

Right then and there, at the king's command, the vizier and the groom were beheaded, and the king's daughter, her husband, her father, and her brother rejoiced in each other.

## **Strike, Strike, What You Saw Is All You'll Get**

They say that once upon a time Sultan Mahmud disguised himself by putting on dervish clothes and went out to roam around the market and lanes of the city. By chance, he passed by a blacksmith's shop, and he listened in, somebody inside was pounding away at something and saying, "Strike, strike, what you saw is all you'll get." The sultan, perplexed by these words, said to himself, "I have to find out what is the secret of these words."

He knocked at the door, and the blacksmith opened it for him.

"I'm a poor wayfarer," the sultan said, "Maybe you could let me stay the night."

"Of course," the man said. "Please come in and be my guest."

Then he started working, and once again he said the same words as before.

Sultan Mahmud couldn't keep himself from asking, "If it's not impolite, sir, what do these words mean?"

"Leave me alone," he said. "They're for me alone to know."

But it didn't do any good. Sultan Mahmud wouldn't leave him alone.

"Brother," he said, "these words I say are the result of a dream I had. One night in a dream I came across a mountain. I looked and saw that the mountain was full of holes, and water was coming out of the holes. Water was gushing out of some of them, but it was only dribbling out of others. Then I saw an Arab man bathed in light. 'My friend,' he said, 'these are the destinies of people. Everyone who has a lot of water here has a great destiny earmarked for him and consequently is rich. Everyone whose water is scanty here has little destiny and a poor,' 'All right,' I asked, 'where is mine?' He took me by the arm and led me to a rock in which there was a crack. A little water was oozing out of the crack. 'This is your destiny,' he said.

"When I woke up realized that all my effort was in vain. What had been fated to me was all would get. Many times I worked all day without making any money. For a long time now I have taken that dream to heart and realized that I am a poor and am not going to get any richer. That's why I have made it a custom to repeat those words."

Sultan Mahmud decided then and there to do something to help this poor man, and after he rested there for a few hours, he said good-bye. Two or three days later he ordered a chicken to be stuffed with money, sewn up, and then roasted. When it was put on a brass platter and brought to him, he said, "Put it on a tray and take it to the blacksmith in a certain place, and tell him, "This is a gift from the sultan's house."

The servant carried out the order and took the tray of food to the blacksmith, who put it aside, saying to himself, "Let me do my work. I'll eat it later."

It wasn't long before a beggar knocked on the door and asked for charity.

The blacksmith said, "I've already eaten a crust of bread. It would be better for me not eat this food the sultan sent," And he gave it to the beggar, who took it off to a corner. When the chicken was cut open, out poured money. The beggar picked it up, went away and became rich, so he gave up begging.

A few days later Sultan Mahmud sent for one of his servants and said, "Go find out what the blacksmith is doing." He obeyed the order and returned, saying, "My lord, he is working just as before and saying, "Strike, strike, what you saw is all you'll get."

The sultan was very surprised by this, and that night he disguised himself in dervish clothing and went to the blacksmith. Just as before, he asked him if he would give him a place to rest for a while.

The sultan sat down and starting chatting. Finally he asked, "Did they send you a gift from the sultan's house? A few days ago they put a roasted chicken on brass platter and sent it."

"Yes," he said, "they sent me the food, but a beggar came to me, and I said to myself, "I've eaten a crust of bread. I won't eat this; I'll give it to the beggar."

In utter astonishment Sultan Mahmud said, "It's true, whatever is fated comes to be." Then he said, "Dear sir, I am Sultan Mahmud, and that chicken I sent you was stuffed with money. God didn't fate it to you. It's clear that your dream was true, and you're right to say, "Strike, strike, what you saw is all you'll get."