



The Bride of the Fountain

A. G. Seklemian

Armenian

Easy
4 min read

Somewhere I have heard that there were once three sisters, whose mother went to town to buy them dresses. On her way back to the village she sat down by a fountain to rest.

“Tush!” exclaimed she, remembering that she had forgotten to buy a dress for her youngest daughter.

Suddenly an old man came out from the fountain, and standing before the woman, said:

“My name is Tush; why did you call me?”

“I did not call you,” said the woman, “I exclaimed, ‘Tush!’ because I had forgotten to buy a dress for my youngest daughter.”

“Go, bring her,” said the old man, “and call on me again; I will give her a dress.”

The woman went and brought her daughter to the fountain. As soon as she uttered the word “Tush!” the old man came out. He took the maiden into the fountain and never came back, in spite of the repeated exclamations of the woman, who tired of repeating, “Tush! Tush!” At last she gave up hope, and going home mourned the wonderful disappearance of her pretty daughter. After one or two months she went again to the fountain and uttered the word “Tush!” The old man came out, and seeing the woman he turned toward the fountain, saying:

“Halloo! son, your mother-in-law has come to call on her daughter. Won’t you send her out?”

“Certainly,” said a voice from within. “I will send her to pay a visit to her mother, as is the custom.”

In a few minutes the anxious mother saw her daughter come out from the fountain dressed as a beautiful bride, and she took her home.

“Mamma,” said the bride, “give me a separate room; my husband told me that he will come to me every night.”

The mother gave her a separate room. The bridegroom visited her every night in the shape of a partridge. He used to come after nightfall, and flapping his wings, perch on the window ledge. She opened the window and took him in. Every morning the partridge flew away before dawn. Her two sisters, envious of the happiness of their youngest sister, brought razors and nailed them around the window. At nightfall the partridge came flying, and when he was perching on the window he struck his wings against the razors, which wounded his body in several places. He was hardly able to fly back to his fountain, and there he was confined to his bed. He vowed to be revenged upon his bride, who he thought had put the razors on the window. The bride, seeing that the partridge did not come for five or six days, went with her mother to the fountain.

“Tush!” they called, and lo! the old man came out, and turning to the fountain, exclaimed:

“Son, your bride and mother-in-law have come.”

“Oh! oh!” cried the partridge from within, “I do not want such a bride. I beseech you, put on your eagle’s suit, take her to the seventh heaven, and thence cast her to the torrid desert.”

Father Tush at once changed himself into an eagle, and carried the bride away and cast her to the sandy desert. There she fell upon the sand, but did not die.

“O Heaven!” exclaimed the maiden, “what have I done to deserve such treatment.”

She wandered about in the desert without knowing where to go. At nightfall she buried herself in the sand to sleep. Soon there came two conjurers, who sat down near her. They conjured, and lo! innumerable great serpents gathered around them. They sat in council, inquired of each other, and prepared remedies for a thousand and one diseases. For razor cuts they devised this remedy: “Wash the patient with the first milk from the breasts of a woman, and put upon the wounds the dried blood taken from a young woman’s veins. On the

third application the patient will be healed.”

The maiden, who was listening to them attentively, kept that remedy in mind, and on the following morning started for her husband’s fountain. After a long journey, she came to her own country, begged from the village women a mother’s first milk, and opening one of her own veins, got some blood which she dried in the sun. She then went to the fountain disguised as a lad.

“Tush!” she exclaimed, and the old man came out.

“What do you want?” said he.

“I am a doctor,” she said; “I had forgotten to get some of my medicines in the village, therefore I said ‘Tush.’”

The old man went in and informed his son that there was a human doctor on the fountain.

“Bring him in,” said the lad, “let us see if he can administer some remedy to my wounds.”

The maiden went in, and after an examination said:

“I can heal you within three days.”

She washed him with the milk and put the dried blood on the wounds, and on the third day the lad was healed.

“What do you want me to pay you?” said the lad.

“I do not want anything,” said the maiden; “I wish you only to remember my name.”

“What is it?” asked the lad.

“Incense-Tree is my name,” answered the maiden.

“Ah!” exclaimed the lad, “that is my wife’s name.”

“I am your wife,” said she, throwing away her masculine attire.

She fell on his neck sobbing, and told him how without a fault she was. They loved each other thereafter, and are still living in that deep fountain.

Three apples fell from heaven; one for me, one for the story-teller, and one for him who entertained the company.

Read more fairy tales on Fairytalez.com