

Water Stories from The Maghreb

Algeria - Morocco - Tunisia





Water Stories from The Maghreb

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Algerian Stories



Rainwater



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Algerian heritage of Oued Souf and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

This tale was written with a group of women volunteers as part of a participatory writing workshop
organized by the measure «Maghreb storytellers, actors of change for water resources preservation»
in September 2017 in El Oued. A group of 11 participants contributed to the writing of this story namely :
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Once upon a time there was a village in the middle of the Sahara. There, in a little cottage, a middle-aged woman lived with her small children. The only source of water for the village was a single well that was very far way and difficult to reach, causing the villagers to suffer greatly during the periods of drought.



One day, as the people were busy with their day-to-day tasks, something unexpected happened : it started to rain very hard. The villagers were surprised and overjoyed, and began playing under the pouring rain, celebrating and enjoying the cool raindrops that dissipated the heat of the previous days.

While the people were busy enjoying themselves, the woman told her children to gather all the containers that could be used to store water. The children were upset by this task that kept them from joining their friends and the other villagers in their celebration of the rain, especially because the villagers, including the children, were laughing and making fun of them. They were angry with their mother and said : “Why are you making us the laughingstock of the whole village?”

She replied : “Be patient, my children, keep collecting water and you will see the result. They may be laughing today, but tomorrow you will be the ones laughing. Tomorrow will arrive soon enough, and patience is a virtue, my dears.”



The rain continued during day and night, then it suddenly stopped and the sky became clear. After a few days the well that supplied their water dried up. The villagers began to suffer from the lack of water and everyone was feeling thirsty. People started asking everyone for a drink of water to quench their



thirst. A strange spectacle!

Meanwhile, the woman was sitting in her cottage with her children and laughing with them. They could quench their thirst from the supply of water that was the fruit of their past hardship.

She turned to her children and said : “My dear children, the promised day has come ; they laughed at you yesterday, but today you are the ones who are laughing. Remember: those who endured hardship and conserved water yes-



terday, are able to drink it today.”

From that day onward, the children understood the importance of water and its conservation for life and well-being.

I end my story by invoking blessings on the Prophet, our Leader, and reminding you that if you have water, but you waste it and don't appreciate its value, the day will come when you will need every single drop.



The brave Woman



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Algerian heritage of Oued Souf and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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*Starting in the name of God and invoking blessings on the chosen Prophet,
I'm going to tell you a story that is illustrated by this maxim: **

*I came down from the sky and flowed on the earth,
but was all dried up by the crops that I watered.*

Once upon a time there was a young girl who lived in a small village. Every day early in the morning, she would go to the well to fetch water, carrying on her shoulders a yoke with two buckets.

One day, when she arrived at the well, she would find a man drawing water from the well and pouring it into a large container, in order to keep it from being wasted and thus making it available for other people. The young girl learned also to fill her buckets from the container.

*[*The original consists of four rhyming lines that are paraphrased in the translation.]*



After a few years, the girl got married and went with her husband to live in the neighboring village with his mother and elderly father. One day, her husband started feeling tired all the time, went ill and wasn't able to leave the house anymore.

Every morning her old father-in-law would go by himself to fetch water for the family, despite his old age. The young woman would divide up the water brought by the old man to be used in various ways. She put the water for ablutions in a brass pitcher and the water for washing in a large jar, and after boiling the water for drinking and cooking, she put it in a water skin fabricated with goat skin and hung it in a safe place.



After a couple of years, her father-in-law died, and the couple went to live on a farm far away from that village. Because her husband was still very sick, the young woman was forced to work by herself on the farm very hard to support her family. Sometime later, she became pregnant, but despite her condition she continued to work as usual. In order to water the date palms, she would open the cistern gate and let the water flow along the irrigation canal, directing it first to the date palms, then to the other trees, and finally to the planted crops.



A few months later when the woman gave birth to her child, the health condition of his husband deteriorated and he died. She couldn't take care of the farm anymore the owner of the farm kicked them off the land. The family moved to a nearby village and the brave widow went to work for a poultry farm, distributing the water in a fair and economical manner, in order to meet the needs of the poultry and save water at the same time.



The woman lived the rest of her life this way, always using water wisely as she considered it a precious resource. She would share her story to adults and children, because [as she would say], “water is life.”

And as the saying goes : *ghāba ghāba wa-kull ‘ām ta’tina as-sāba*
[Forests everywhere, but the harvest comes every year]



Farida and the Drop of Water



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Algerian heritage of Oued Souf and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time there was an intelligent and hardworking girl named Farida. One day at school, she was carefully listening to her science teacher while she was explaining why it is so important to conserve water and use it wisely. As Farida always liked to learn more, she raised her hand and asked the teacher what it meant to conserve water. The teacher welcomed her question and explained that water should only be used as much as needed and not be wasted, as the precious resource could run out. Farida was surprised to hear this, because she had never thought that water could run out. What would happen if it did? Would there be no water to drink, would everyone not be able to take a bath, wash their clothes, and clean their homes?



Farida returned home, thinking about what her teacher had explained at school. All of the sudden, she heard the sound of water running out of the kitchen faucet. She ran to the kitchen and saw her mother washing some vegetables. She screamed at her: “No, mom, I don’t want it to run out! This is too much water for washing vegetables!” Farida’s mother was surprised and thus slightly reduced the amount of water she was using.



At the end of the day, Farida kissed her parents goodnight and went to bed. An hour later, she heard a strange sound, like the voice of a little girl talking with her mouth full of water. The voice called out to her saying: “Fariiiiiida, wake up! Come with me!” Farida woke up, rubbed her eyes, and looked around in amazement. On the table nearby, she saw a small drop of water, looking at her with fear and sadness. In a state of great surprise, Farida asked : “Who are you?” The voice replied : “I’m a drop of water, Farida. I came to say goodbye because I’m leaving, along with all the other drops that will not stay here with you.” Farida cried out : “No, no, please, stay! What will we do without you?” The drop of water said : “Because you don’t take care for us and don’t conserve us, we’re going to run away. Goodbye, Farida!, goodbye!” Then the drop of water jumped out of the window, and Farida ran after it trying to catch it, but she could not.



Farida went to her mother to tell her what had happened, but she found her mother with her face covered with soap and calling out for water to rinse it off. She turned to her father and found him searching for clean clothes to put on, but he couldn't find any. Her little sister was crying and screaming because she wanted a drink of water, but there wasn't any. Farida went outside to the garden in order to get some water from the garden's faucet, but she found that in their beautiful garden the flowers had wilted, and the leaves had fallen off the trees. The air was filled with dust, and everything was dry.



Farida cried and cried, calling out : “Please come back! Forgive us, dear little drop of water! Don’t leave us!” Then Farida’s mother came into her daughter’s room carrying a glass of water and saying : “Wake up, Farida!, wake up! You were dreaming! Drink this water and stop crying, my dear.” Farida woke up and told her mother about the dream ; then she took the glass of water, kissed and caressed it, and said : “We’re going to conserve you and use you wisely. We can’t live without you!” Her mother smiled tenderly and said : “What a lovely thing to say!”



Loulja and Water



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Algerian heritage of Oued Souf and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time there was a woman named Loulja. Loulja was married to Mohamed, had four children. She took well care of her family. She was both wise and clever. Loulja's husband was an important merchant in the cloth market and well-respected in the village.

One day, Fatima, Mohamed's cousin, came to visit them and decided to stay for some time as she didn't see the family for a long time and she was missing them so much.

Fatima was a very beautiful woman and she would take care of herself to be always beautiful and attractive.

Back then, the country suffered from serious drought. Men were obliged to walk long distances to fetch water.

One day, Loulja was annoyed by Fatima who was wasting water by washing herself several times during the day or using too much water to water the garden. Loulja told herself : "This cousin is wasting water while my husband is obliged to walk long distances to find it, what could I do to make Fatima leave the house?"



Loulja thought for a long time about how to solve her problem and decided to go see the wise woman of the village. She told her about what had happened and how her husband walked long distances to carry water. The wise woman told Loulja that the solution to her problem was very easy, and she gave her a ploy to use.

Because the men of the village had to fetch water from a very distant location, she told Loulja: “When your husband comes to ask you for jars in which to fetch water, give him the smallest containers that you have and tell him that you have enough water remaining from the last time.”



Fatima wasted a lot of water, using it up to show off her beauty, and when Mohamed wanted to go and fetch water, she would give him all the containers in her possession. After a few months Mohamed began to complain about Fatima, because he had to go and fetch water for her every single day, while Loulja used her water wisely and only asked her husband to fetch some twice a week. After a few months, Mohamed thought and told himself : “Loulja, who has four children, asks for less water than Fatima, who is a guest and should respect the rules of the house. If I continue doing so, I won’t be able to open my shop or buy and sell any cloth. My only job will be to bring water for my beautiful cousin, who always wants to be more beautiful than my wife.”



That is when the merchant and his wife, both decided to ask Fatima politely to return to her home. And that is how Loulja protected her husband and children, by using water wisely. Loulja went from house to house and village to village telling people her story.

As the saying goes : Men are water canals and women are the basins they empty into.

Man proposes but God disposes.

An apple for me and one for you, and one for the person who listens to me.

All glory and honor to the Prophet and his Companions, to the Best of Created Beings.



Dry Land that became lush and green



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of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time, there was an old man who had only one daughter. She was everything he had in this world. The old man lived and worked on the farm of a wealthy man. He tilled the soil, planted, and watered the crops, until the farm became a lush paradise. The man raised his daughter and taught her the principles of proper agriculture and irrigation to ensure that the plants get enough water without wasting any. He would always tell her: “My daughter, if you learn from me and take my advice, one day you will take over the management of this farm.” In fact, the girl was intelligent and ready to listen, learn, and take the advice of her elderly father.

As the years went by and the old man’s health deteriorated, he was no longer able to take care of the farm the way he used to, so his daughter took over all the work on the farm by herself. One day, the father said to his daughter : “I’m old and no longer able to help you. Youth has passed by and will not return. He who does good works will be rewarded with water from the sky, but he who does evil will be punished as with a disease for which there is no cure.”

The daughter paid attention to her father’s words, remembering them and thinking deeply about their meaning. She worked on the farm diligently and honestly, tilling and planting and watering until it became even more lush and green. The landowner was pleased with her work and her honesty, and she became his most important worker, while the farm became famous in all the



neighboring regions. After some time, a wise man passed through the region and shouted out : “Soon there will be a drought and the soil will dry up ... drought ... drought ... drought!”

When the people of the region heard this, they laughed and made fun of him. The wise man became angry and said: “Do not rejoice over the prosperity you have today, for I have seen a desert that became a river and dry land that became lush and green. Our Lord is able to change misfortune into good fortune in an instant.” Then the wise man left them, to continue on his way.

The daughter heard what the wise man said and went to tell her father that she had heard a wise man walking along the road and shouting “drought ... drought ... drought!” She went on to say : “I am afraid, because if what he says is true, we will lose the farm that is the source of our food and livelihood.” The old man and his daughter decided to tell the landowner about the matter, so they could try to find a solution.



The landowner told the old man and his daughter that if they found a way to save the farm, he would give them half of it. The clever daughter said: “I have found the solution. You, my father, and I will work together to build above-ground clay cisterns. Then we’ll dig a deep hole in the ground near each one, and between each cistern and hole we’ll build an irrigation canal. “

She started her work and kept building and digging until she finished everything. The landowner was very impressed with her idea. After a few months it started to rain, and the cisterns and holes filled up with water.



Then the drought arrived, but the girl's clever plan saved the farm, which remained lush and green by means of irrigation. The landowner fulfilled his promise and gave her half the farm. She married the landowner's son, and they lived happily ever after, thanks to the idea of collecting water in cisterns and underground holes, conserving it, and not wasting it.



**Conserve what you have
to make it last**



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*I start my story in the name of God and his Prophet
“God prey over him”*

This is a story that Grandmothers would tell their grandchildren at bedtime.

Once upon a time there was a sheikh named Nu'man. He lived in a village where people got their food from their gardens growing all sorts of good things. Sheikh Nu'man was known as a great wise man, who was famous for his wisdom. He used to travel from one country to another. One day, Sheikh Nu'man heard the king's spokesman say : “Listen, villagers! The king wishes to inform you that there is a drought and our gardens and fields will dry up and wither. He promises a reward for whoever finds a solution to this problem. This person will be named my minister in charge of all the gardens.”

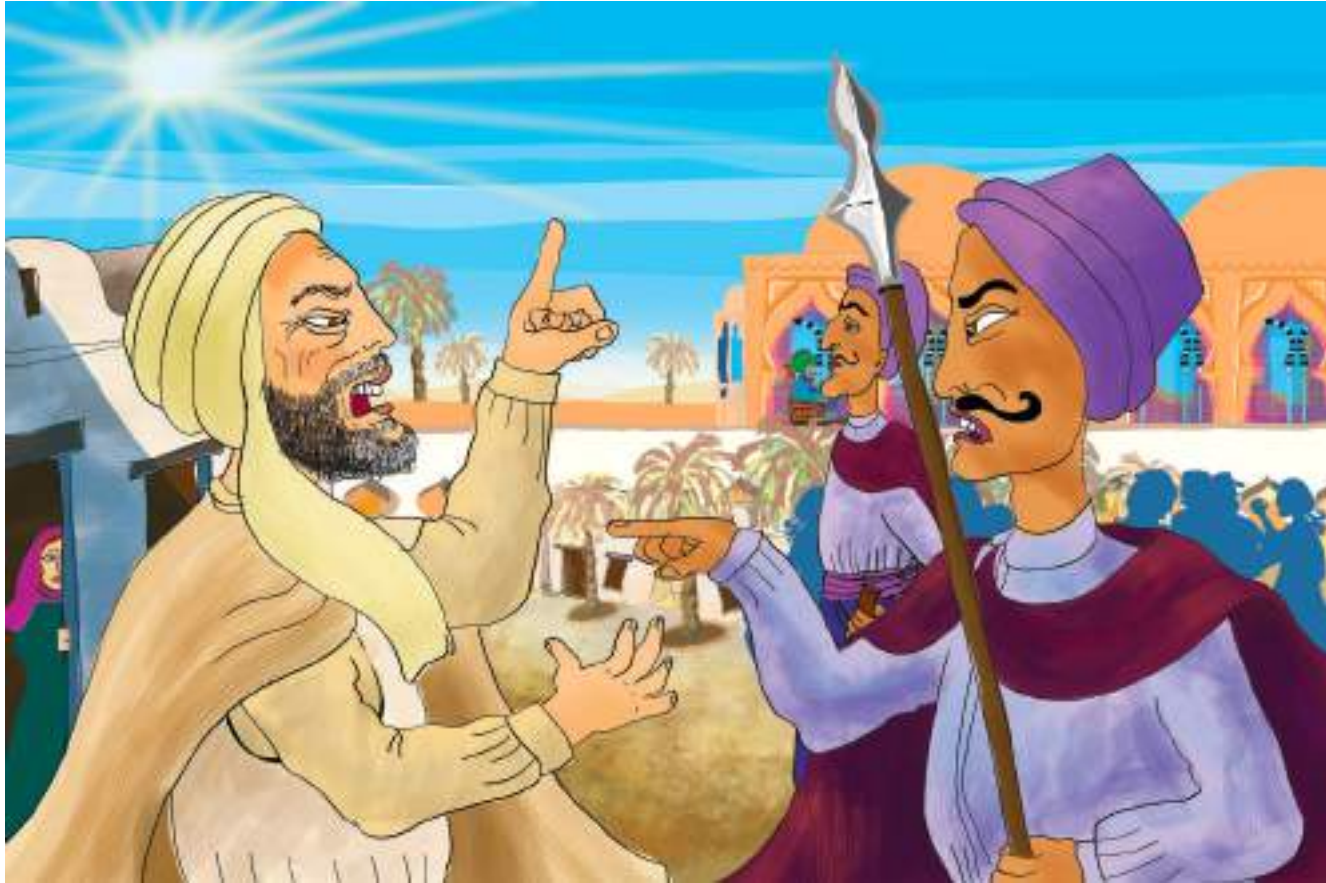
The leaders and elders of the village, including Sheikh Nu'man, went to see the king. Each one presented what he considered to be an appropriate solution, but the king was not satisfied with any of them. When it was Sheikh Nu'man's turn to present his idea, he said : “I need seven months, and then God willing, I will come back with the perfect solution.” The king agreed to his request, and Sheikh Nu'man left the village on a journey. Seven months later, the king sent his guards to Sheikh Nu'man's house to get the solution from him. When they knocked on the door, Sheikh Nu'man's wife opened and told them that



the sheikh had not yet returned from his journey. When the king heard this, he became very angry and issued an order depriving Sheikh Nu'man's family of all their rights in the kingdom.

The years went by, one by one...finally after seven years, Sheikh Nu'man returned from his journey. When the guards saw him, they hurried to inform the king of his return, and the king ordered them to bring him immediately. But Sheikh Nu'man was angry over the king's harsh treatment of his family, and he refused to go with them, saying : "Inform the king that Sheikh Nu'man says: who ignores his fortune invites misfortune."

When the king heard Sheikh Nu'man's words, he decided to go and see him by himself, and when he arrived, Sheikh Nu'man said : "I traveled for many years, looking for a way to rescue the city from the drought and famine. I left my family in your custody, and as a reward you deprived them of their rights. I have found the solution, but I will give it to you on one condition." The king asked : "What is your condition?" and Sheikh Nu'man replied : "My condition is that you solve the following riddle, which contains the solution to the city's problem." The king asked : "What is your riddle?" and Sheikh Nu'man then recited a popular saying : "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." He said : "This is my condition : think about it and give me the solution in seven days, seven months, or seven years ; you have all the time you need."



Seven days passed and seven nights, during which the king could not sleep as he tried to think of the solution to the riddle. On the eighth day he woke up and shouted that he had found the solution, and he insisted on going himself to see Sheikh Nu'man.

When the king arrived at the sheikh's house, his wife opened the door and informed him that Sheikh Nu'man had died. The king was sad and dejected, but Sheikh Nu'man's wife told him that the sheikh had left a message for the king with the following advice :

- *Seven countries and seven valleys.*
- *As you sow you shall reap, and what you conserve you shall have.*
- *When young work for your old age, and when old work those who come after you.*
- *A tall woman will do her chores, while the short woman will seek her neighbor's help.*
- *Conserve what you have to make it last.*

The king understood only one thing from this advice: that he must travel and pass through seven consecutive valleys. The king ordered to start preparations for the trip, and he set off on his journey with his entourage.

While on their way they reached the first valley, which was very dry, and in the neighboring country there was an unjust and miserly king who barely gave any water to the people of the region, who were displaced from their homes.



When the king remembered Sheikh Nu'man's words : “ who ignores his fortune invites misfortune,” he ordered his guards to take the displaced people to his city and take care of them.

The king then continued on his journey to the second valley, which was also completely dry and barren. The king said : “There is nothing left in this valley but only stones,” so they continued on their journey to the third valley, which was also dry, but there was an old man sitting next to a dry cistern and repeating : “As you sow you shall reap, and what you conserve you shall have.”

Thus, the king knew that he was on the right path, and they continued their journey to the fourth valley, which was dry and whose people were looking for a solution, so they decided to join the king on his journey. They reached the fifth valley and found nearby a young girl who was crying. The king asked her why she was crying and she replied : “My grandmother says that I am short, and then she says : A tall woman will do her chores, while the short woman will seek her neighbor's help.” The king went then to see the grandmother and asked her what the saying meant. She replied : “There is a neighboring country whose people live very comfortably, and whenever we go to ask them for help, their king repeats this refrain.”

The king decided to go to this neighboring country to see if perhaps he could find the solution to his problem. They arrived at the sixth valley and found a

little water in it, and on one side there was a small garden with a cottage in the middle, in which a woman was working. The woman greeted the guests and told them that her husband had built the house and planted the garden for them to live off it, and that he always said : When young work for your old age, and when old work those who come after you.” When the king found out that this woman was Sheikh Nu’man’s widow, he was sure that he was close to finding the solution. They thanked the woman and continued on their way until they



reached the seventh valley. The king and his companions were dazzled to see that the valley had an abundantly flowing river, on the banks of which an old man was walking and calling out : “Conserve what you have to make it last.”

The king followed the old man until they reached a large garden with all kind of trees and fruits, like a paradise on earth. The king was astonished, and he asked about the people who lived there about the secret of this paradise. They took him to see the wise man, who told the king : “I wish that God would make us a forest and that people would come to gather wood.” Then he told them to follow him, and he led them to a large reservoir with many irrigation canals emanating from it. That is when the king understood and found the solution to Sheikh Nu’man’s riddle, in which he said : An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.



The ruler of the village then told them : “This is all thanks to a wise sheikh who came from a distant village. We put into practice his recommendations, and these are the wonderful results. After the sheikh saw these results, he returned to his country to the same.”

The king said that this was Sheikh Nu'man, and now that he knew the solution to the riddle, he returned to his country to implement the ideal method for conserving water. He ordered the construction of reservoirs and irrigation canals, and after a few years his city became verdant, full of trees bearing fruits of every kind, with abundant water. Thanks to the wisdom of the king and his efforts to conserve water, the people lived happily ever after.





Moroccan Stories



Sheep Intestines and a Pomegranate



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Moroccan heritage of Taounate and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time, there was a man whose wife died and left him with a daughter. After some time, he married another woman, who also had a daughter.

When it was time to celebrate the Eid al-Adha holiday (Feast of the Sacrifice), the wife dressed her daughter in holiday clothes and fed her with special treats. On the other hand, she gave her stepdaughter some sheep intestines to clean. The girl took two buckets, put the intestines in one of them, and went to the spring. She filled a bucket with water and moved away from the spring. Then she dug a hole in the ground and buried the waste from the intestines in it. Next, she cleaned them with the water from the bucket and then moved away from the spring again to pour out the dirty water. Finally, she filled the bucket with fresh water from the spring to take back home.

Suddenly a turtle jumped out of the spring and told her : “As you have protected the spring water and kept it pure by moving away to clean the sheep intestines, I am going to reward you. Give me a piece of the intestines and I will give you a pomegranate.”

The girl replied : “If I give you a piece of the intestines, my stepmother will beat me.” Then the turtle said again : “Just give me a piece of the intestines and I will give you a pomegranate. I will protect you as you protected the spring; don’t be afraid.” The girl replied the same : “If I give you a piece of the intestines, my stepmother will beat me,” and the turtle repeated : “Give me a piece of the intestines and I will give you a pomegranate. Trust me.”



So, the girl gave the turtle a piece of the intestines and the turtle gave her a pomegranate, and disappeared into the depths of the spring. As the girl finished her work, she sat down to eat the pomegranate, but it was not a real piece of fruit. Inside it the girl found a beautiful embroidered gown, delicate slippers, a golden belt, a pearl necklace, lovely earrings, and elegant bracelets and rings. She put everything on and was very happy ; then she picked up the buckets and returned home.

While she was on her way home, the sultan's son, the prince, saw her and was enchanted by her beauty. He followed her without her knowing it and watched her go into her house. When he knocked on the door, her father opened and immediately recognized the prince who said : "Sir, I want to marry your daughter." The father replied : "Let me ask her opinion."

He went and told his daughter that the prince wants to marry her she agreed and said : "Yes, I will marry him. Who would actually refuse the sultan's son?"

When the wedding preparations began, the man's wife got very jealous and thought : "Why should she marry the sultan's son instead of my daughter?" She went into her stepdaughter's room and locked her inside. Then she took her daughter into another room, dressed her in the finest clothes, and decorated her hands with henna so that she looked exactly like the bride. Then she left each girl in separate rooms.



When the groom's family arrived to escort the bride to the wedding, the woman went into her stepdaughter's room and told her : "Come my child and let me comb your hair." She pretended to comb the girl's hair, but she actually placed a magic comb deeply in her hair, and suddenly the girl turned into a dove and flew out of the window. The woman then brought her daughter out of the room and presented her to the groom's family as if she were the bride. The groom's family didn't recognize her because her face was covered, and they could not see who she really was.

On the following day, the dove was in the garden of the sultan's palace, where the servants were busily planting, watering, and tending the trees and flowers. The dove landed on a tree and started to sing : "Weep oh trees, weep oh stones, and weep oh fish in the depths of the sea." As soon as the dove began singing, the rain started to pour down and the servants had to stop their work. The prince saw them and asked them what happened. One of them replied : "Give us your pledge of protection, and I will tell you." He gave them his pledge and the servant told him : "There is a dove sitting on top of a tree in the garden, and as soon as she began singing it started to rain." The prince asked : "Take me there so I can see myself what is happening."



He went with his servant to the garden, and as soon as he saw the dove it started to sing : “Laugh oh trees, laugh oh stones, and laugh oh fish in the depths of the sea.”

At that moment the sky cleared up, the sun appeared from behind the clouds, and the land became dry once more. The prince was astonished, and when he held out his hand to the dove, it approached him. As he began stroking its head, the magic pin fell out and suddenly the dove turned back into the beautiful young woman he saw nearby the spring and with whom he had fallen in love. He asked her what had happened and who had done this to her, and she told him her story.



Then he said : “Very well, you are the one who will choose their punishment. What is your decision?” She replied : “I want my stepmother and her daughter to leave this country, and if they ever come back, and never come back.”

Thus, they were ordered to leave the country for ever. The young woman and the prince lived together happily ever after.

This story of mine has been passed on from valley to valley.



Aicha, the Patient



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Moroccan heritage of Taounate and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Literary and technical reviewer :

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Illustrations : Abdel8

The follow-up and direction of the realization of this tale was ensured by:

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Once upon a time, there lived a brother and his sister Aicha whose parents had died and left them a small amount of property. The sister was older than her brother, so she was the one who raised him.

After some time had passed, one day the girl asked her brother a question in order to find out if he had grown up yet and was ready to marry. She said: “Brother, if our parents had left you some money, what would you do with it?” He replied : “I would buy a ball to play with.” She thought : “My brother is still a child who doesn’t understand anything.”

After some more time had passed, she asked him again : “If our parents had left you some money, what would you do with it?” He said : “I would go on a pilgrimage to Mecca or I would get married.” She thought : “Now my brother has become an adult and ready to marry.”

The sister started looking for a bride for her brother, and she finally found a woman who seemed perfect to her. Aicha ignored that this beautiful woman was actually an ogress!



The wedding was held, and on the following day the bride ate a cow. When her husband asked her where the cow was, she said : “Your sister Aicha ate it,” and he believed her.

After some more time had passed, the ogress ate a goat. When her husband asked her where the goat was, she said : “Your sister Aicha ate it.”

Shortly thereafter the ogress gave birth to a son, and then she ate him. When her husband asked her where his son was, she said : “Your sister Aisha ate him.” The husband had been patient with the loss of the cow and the goat, but not for the loss of his son. He took his sister to the forest to gather wood without saying anything on his intentions. He waited until she stretched out her arms to pick up some wood, and he tied her hands. He said to her : “I was patient when you ate the cow, saying to myself that our parents had left it for both of us. I was patient when you ate the goat, saying to myself that our parents had left it for both of us. But you had no right to eat my son.”

He did not allow Aicha say a word, and he left her there in the forest. She started to cry and then began singing : “Oh I’m lost in the forest, she ate the cow and said it was Aicha. Oh, I’m lost in the forest, she ate the goat and said



it was Aicha. Oh, I'm lost in the forest, she ate his son and said it was Aicha. Oh, my God, I'm lost in the forest!"

She stayed in the forest until she met a wise man who asked her what had happened to her and who had tied her hands. She told him what had happened, and he asked her to marry him, and she agreed. One day the wise man went to a distant village to study, and while he was gone Aicha gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl. One of the men from the village went to the wise man and told him : "Your wife has given birth to two dogs." The man believed him and said : "If she has given birth to two dogs, let her go away and take the two dogs with her." When the people of the village told Aicha about her husband's decision, she said : "Wait until I get my children." Then she put her son on her back and carried her daughter in her arms.

She left the village and followed the path of the river. Soon she felt thirsty, and when she bent down to take a drink, her son fell into the river and started to drift away, and she had nothing with which to grab him. As she ran along the river following her son and crying, she heard a voice calling out to her : "Stretch out your arms, Aicha the Patient, stretch out your arms and your hands will become stronger."



She stretched out her arms and immediately her hands became stronger, and found them decorated with henna. She grabbed hold of her son, kissed him, and held him in her arms, filled with joy. Then she got some water from the river and drank it. When this miracle happened, Aicha said : “As God has given me back force to my hands, I will protect this river. I will stay close to it and protect it.”

She built a small house near the river, and whenever children would come to fetch water, she would tell them : “Do not waste the water of the river, my children, and do not pollute it, for it is what gives us life. Look at my hands. They were ill and weak, but by the grace of God, as soon as I put my hands in the river they became strong again.”

Aicha stayed near the river and became its guardian. One day a man came to fetch water and saw how well she was taking care of the river. He said that he wanted to help her take care of it and then he asked her to marry him, and she accepted.

The couple expanded the house that Aicha had built, and they lived there near the river, taking care of it. One day a beggar came and knocked on their door, and Aicha recognized immediately that it was her brother. his wife, the ogress had eaten everything he owned, and he had nothing left. Aicha told her hus-

band to let him in and share their meal. When they had finished, Aicha's children asked her to tell them a story. She started telling them the story of her life and everything that had happened with her brother, who began to sink into the earth out of shame. As she told the story, he kept sinking until only his beard could be seen above the ground. Aicha pulled him out with great force to save him. Then, he recognized his sister Aicha and he asked her to forgive him. She forgave him, and he came out of the ground, and the brother, his sister, her husband and their children all lived together happily ever after.

This is my story, it has been passed on from valley to valley.



Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Moroccan heritage of Taounate and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Illustrations : Abdel8

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Once upon a time, there were two brothers. One of them had seven sons while the other one had seven daughters. When they went to the mosque to perform their prayers, the father of sons would say to his brother in front of everyone : “Get up, father of seven sorrows, so the father of seven joys can sit.”

The father of seven daughters would go home dejected and told his wife what had happened : “My brother always comes up to me in front of everyone and says: “Get up, father of seven sorrows, so the father of seven joys can sit,” and the same thing happens every day.”

His youngest daughter was very sad when she overheard what her father said, and she told her mother : “Tell father that the next time my uncle says to him “Get up, father of seven sorrows, so the father of seven joys can sit, he should reply : Let us send my youngest “sorrow” and your oldest “joy” to a distant land, and we will see who does good works and who does wrong.”»

And that is what happened. The next day when the man went to the mosque, his brother came up to him and said, “Get up, father of seven sorrows, so the father of seven joys can sit.” The man replied : “If I have seven sorrows and you have seven joys, let us send my youngest ‘sorrow’ and your oldest ‘joy’ to a distant land, and we will see who does good work and who does wrong.” His brother agreed.

The man returned home and told his wife and daughter about the agreement with his brother. The couples made preparations for the trip and got the horses



ready for the children. The daughter and her cousin traveled a great distance until they came upon two valleys, one white and the other black.

The girl said : “Cousin, which path will you take?” He replied : “I will go along the path of the white valley, and may God illuminate the way for me and my family. You are just a sorrow, so go along the path of the black valley, and may God darken the way for you and your family.”

While she was on her way, the river spoke to her, saying : “Clean me up,” and that is what she did, because the river was black from the liquid of crushed olives.

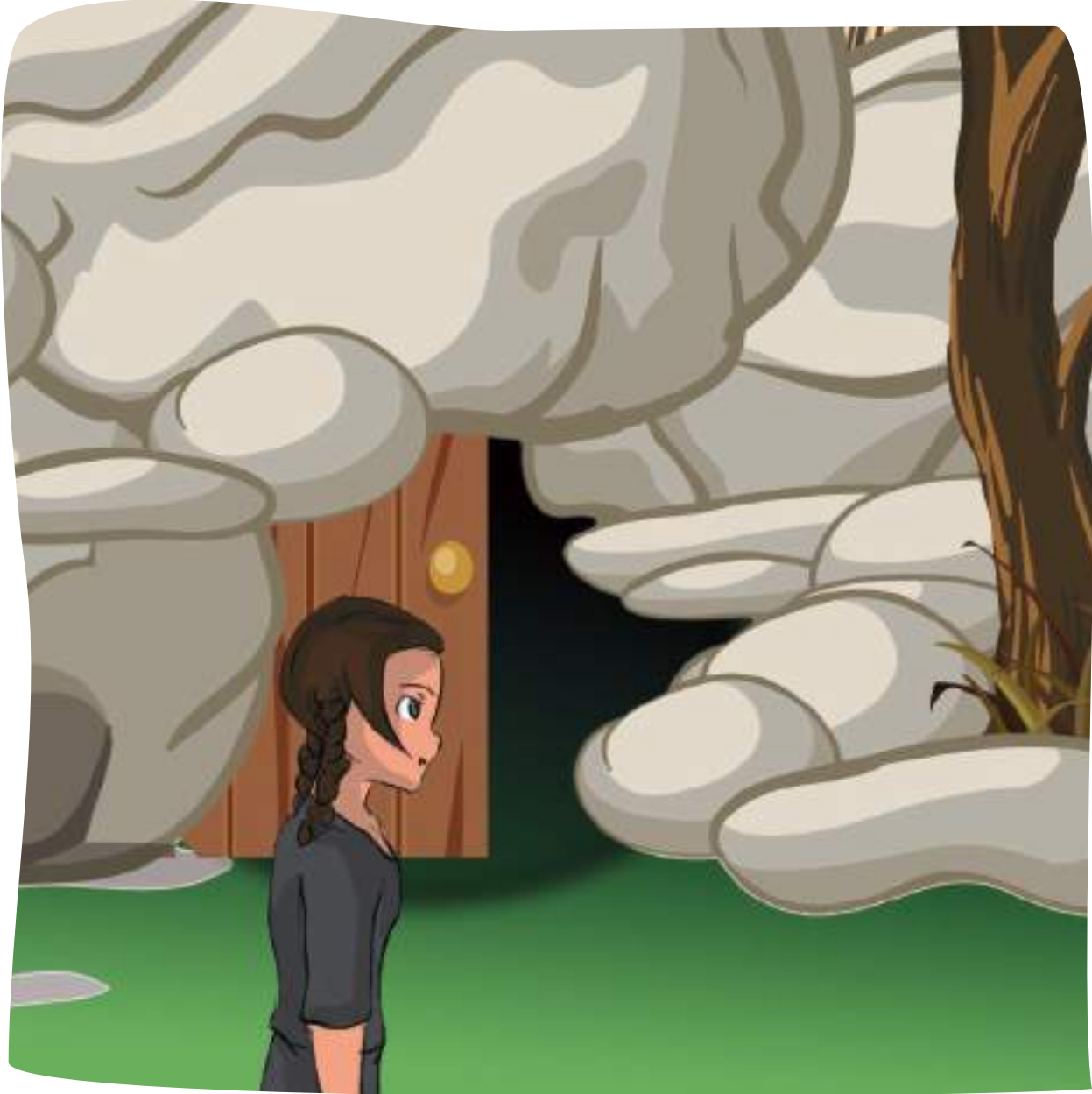
She continued her way until she met an old man, who told her : “Little girl, hit me on the head.” Instead, she cut nicely his hair.

Then he told her : “Take these clothes and tear them up.” Instead, she sewed them for him.

Then he asked her : “Take these clothes and throw them in the mud.” Instead, she washed them for him.

Then he told her : “Take this pot and fill it with clay.” Instead, she cooked food in it for him.

Then he told her : “Take this jar and smash it.” Instead, she brought fresh water in it for him.



Then the old man said : “God bless you, my child. As you have cleaned up the river, I want to reward you. Take the path towards the woods, give your horse enough feed for a day, and leave him in the woods so he doesn’t make any noise. Then follow the path until you come to a small house with a small door. Say : “Open sesame,” and the door will open and let you in. Then say : “Close sesame,” and the door will close behind you. In one of the rooms you will find a large number of dead bodies, as this is the house of the monsters. Hide yourself among the corpses, far away from the door so the monsters will not see you, and don’t touch or go near the metal rod that they use to burn the corpses so as to find out who has entered their house.”

The little girl followed the old man’s instructions and hid herself among the corpses. When the monsters came home, one of them said : “I smell the scent of a human in the house. He heated the metal bar by placing it above the fire and started touching the corpses with it. But when the metal bar touched the little girl’s skin, it had already cooled down and did not burn her.

She remained hidden until the monsters left, and then she entered another room and found that it was full of jewels. She wrapped some of the jewels up in a handkerchief and then she went to the door and said : “Open sesame.” The door opened, and the little girl returned to the woods to get her horse, and went back home to her family.

Her father was overjoyed and told her : “God bless you, my daughter, for you have done good works.” Then he went to see his brother and told him: “Come

and see what my daughter has brought, and tell me, what your son has done?”

He found out that the son had brought back some drums; a drum for his father and another for his mother, and more drums for his brothers. His father told him : “Couldn’t you find anything better to bring? Look what your cousin has brought.”

The father and his daughter returned home, and she showed everyone the jewels that she had brought. Her father said : “Now tell me, who are the joys and who are the sorrows?”



His brother was ashamed. He burst out in tears and told him : “Forgive me, brother, your daughter is a joy and all daughters are joys, but this son of mine is a sorrow.” The uncle apologized to his niece and asked her to show his son where she had found the jewels. She agreed and gave her cousin directions to the place.

The boy went along the path of the black river, which said : “Clean me up,” but he replied : “I don’t have time for that.”

Then he met the old man, who told him : “Son, hit me on the head,” and that is just what he did.

Then he told him : “Take these clothes and tear them up,” and he tore them up.

Then he told him : “Take these clothes and throw them in the mud,” and he threw them in the mud.

Then he told him : “Take this pot and fill it with clay,” and that is what he did.

Then he told him : “Take this jar and smash it,” and he smashed it.

Finally, he told him : “Son, I will reward you for what you have done. Follow the path toward the woods until you come to a small house. Leave your horse in front of the door and go in, and you will find a room full of dead bodies. Hide yourself in the front row closest to the door.”



Following the old man's instructions, the boy left his horse in front of the door, entered the house, and lay down among the corpses in the front row close to the door. When the monsters returned, they found his horse and devoured it. When they entered the house, the boy started to scream. They put him in shackles and decided to keep him for the Eid al-Adha holiday (Feast of the Sacrifice).

As the boy did not return home, his mother began to worry and told the girl :
“My son followed the path as you instructed him and has not yet returned. Can you go and look for him?”

The girl went to the house of the monsters and said : “Open sesame.” The door opened, and she found her cousin bound in shackles. She unfastened the shackles and the two of them returned home. The boy apologized to his cousin and the two brothers made peace with each other.

Sometime later, the girl returned to the house of the monsters and brought back all the jewels. They became very wealthy and they all lived happily ever after.

This story of mine has been passed on from valley to valley and I remained with the good people.



The Sieve



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Moroccan heritage of Taounate and is part of
of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time, there was a man whose wife died and left him with a daughter named Leila. He married another woman with a daughter who was the same age as his daughter, named Aicha. When the girls were older and they had reached the age to help at home, the wife would send them every morning to fetch water from the river. She would give Aicha a tambourine and Leila a sieve. When Aicha used the tambourine, it would fill with water, but Leila's sieve did not fill with water when she used it. When they returned home, and the stepdaughter had not fetched any water, the stepmother used it as an excuse to shout in her face.

One day Leila understood what was going on, so she threw the sieve into the river and went back home without it. Her stepmother shouted in her face and said : "If you don't bring back the sieve you will not stay in this house any more." So, the girl went back to the river crying, and followed the sieve as it drifted along the river, until she came to the house of an old lady on the riverbank. She asked her : "Excuse me ma'am, did you see a sieve in the river?" She replied : "Yes, I did. What do you want to do with it?"



The girl said : “I use it to fetch water, because my stepmother sends me to fetch water with it.” The old woman told her : “My child, we don’t use a sieve to fetch water, we use a bucket. What your stepmother does, is not right. A person who wastes water, can turn into a stone with seaweed hanging from it at the edge of the river. A person who wastes water, will never quench his thirst, even if he drinks bucket after bucket of water. A person who wastes water, ends up like dry land on which no fruit tree can grow, and he will never find anything to eat.”

The old woman gave the girl a bucket and told her : “Take this bucket and use it from now on. But for now, come into my house.” The girl went into the house and the old lady asked her : “What would you like to eat, donkey meat or mutton?”

She said : “Donkey meat is fine, ma’am, the mutton meat is allowed only for my sister Aicha .”

The old woman said : “No, today you will be the one eating mutton.”

Then the old woman brought some henna and jewelry, and told the girl : “What would you like me to decorate your hands with, henna or mud?”

The girl said : “Mud is fine, ma’am. No one has ever decorated my hands with henna at my house.”

The old woman said : “No, today I will decorate your hands with the finest henna.”



When it was time to go to sleep, the old woman asked : “Would you rather sleep on the carpet or the ashes?”

The girl said : “The ashes are fine, ma’am, it’s my sister Aicha who sleeps on the carpet.”

The old woman answered : “Tonight you will sleep on the carpet,” and the girl slept very comfortably on the carpet, which was much better than the ashes.

On the following morning the woman filled the Leila’s sieve and the bucket with pieces of gold and told her to go home, and she sent a dog along to guide her on the way.

The dog began to sing : “Bow wow, the lady has brought gold. Bow wow, the lady has brought jewelry, bow wow, the lady has brought jewelry.” The neighbors heard the singing and came out to see what was going on, and they saw Leila coming back with a bucket full of gold pieces and precious stones. Her father came out and joined his wife. Her father was overjoyed, but his wife was very jealous and angry and thought : “Why is she bringing these riches?” She asked her where she got them, and Leila told her what happened nearby the river.

The stepmother then ordered her daughter to go to the same place. One has to note however, that Aicha was impolite. Aicha went to the riverbank and found the old lady next to the door of her house. She threw down the tambourine as soon as she saw her, and asked her : “Excuse me, ma’am, have you seen a tambourine floating on the river?”

She said : “Come in, my child, I have the tambourine. What do you do with it?”



She said : “I use it to fetch water from the river.”

The old lady said : “A tambourine is better than a sieve, but it is not used to fetch water.”

She gave the girl a bucket and told her : “This is a bucket that we use to fetch water. Now come into my house.”

The girl went into the house and the old lady asked her : “What would you like to eat, donkey meat or mutton?”

She said : “What, donkey meat! Do people eat that? My mother only gives me mutton to eat.”

The old woman said : “Today you will eat donkey meat.”

Then the old woman said to the girl : “What would you like me to decorate your hands with, henna or mud?”

The girl said : “My mother only uses the finest henna.”

The old woman said : “Today I will decorate your hands with mud.”

Then she asked her : “Would you rather sleep on the carpet or the ashes?”

The girl answered : “My sister Leila is the only one who sleeps on the ashes.”

The old woman said : “Tonight you will sleep on the ashes.”

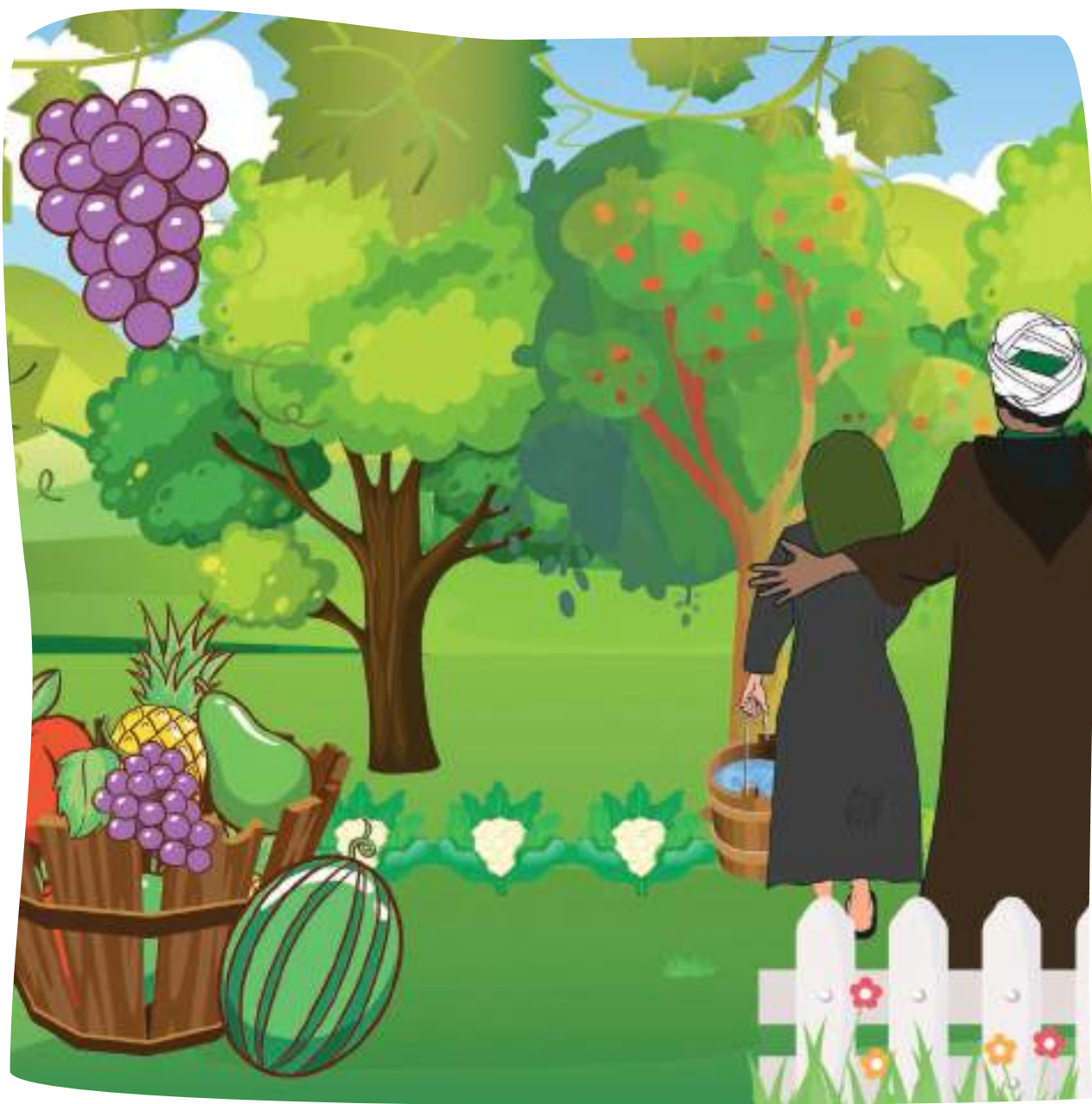
On the following morning the old woman woke up early and gave the girl the bucket and the tambourine filled with coal and told her : “Take these and go away now.” She sent a dog along to guide her on the way, and the dog started singing : “Bow wow, the lady has brought coal, bow wow, the lady has brought coal.” The neighbors heard the singing and came out to see what



was happening, and they saw the disaster. Her mother shouted in her face and took her into the house. When the girl wanted to wash off the mud and ashes from her body, she could not. This happened because the old lady had warned her, saying : “My child, you must protect the water,” and the girl had replied : “There is water everywhere, and I will do whatever I want.”

After some time had passed, Aicha began to regret what she had done and asked God to forgive her. Only then was she able to wash off the mud and ashes from her body. As for Leila, her father bought her a farm, which she took care of until it became fruitful and beautiful.

This story of mine has been passed on from valley to valley and has remained in the hearts of good people.



Haina and her Brother the little Gazelle



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Moroccan heritage of Taounate and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time, there was a young woman named Haina. One day she went to wash her hair in the spring, and a long lock of her hair fell onto the surface of the water. Haina was the sultan's sister. The sultan's servants had taken the horses to drink from that spring, but when the horses saw the lock of hair floating on the water, they refused to drink. The servants were afraid of being late, so they went back and said to the sultan : "Give us your pledge of protection and we will tell you what happened." He gave them his pledge and they told him that when they took the horses to drink from the spring, they saw a lock of hair floating on the water and refused to drink." The sultan replied : "Bring me this lock of hair immediately."



The servants brought the lock of hair to the sultan, and when he held it in his hands he was enchanted by its beauty and said to his servants: “I will marry the person to whom this hair belongs, even if it were my sister Haina, so go and look for her.”

The servants began looking for the person to whom the lock of hair belonged, comparing its length with the length of the hair of every girl in the tribe, and in the end, they found out that it belonged to Haina. As the sultan’s decision was irreversible, the people of the tribe began making preparations for the wedding and to decorate the bride’s hands with henna.



Haina, called to her younger brother and told him : “Go home and find out what they are doing.” Then she went and sat at the top of a hill. Her younger brother went home and found that everyone was happy and busy with the wedding preparations. He went back and told his sister : “Haina, the drummers and musicians are playing their instruments and your family and cousins are dancing among them.”

Haina was saddened by this news and remained at the top of the hill. When her family and her brother the sultan came to escort her to the wedding, she started to cry and began singing : “Rise up, oh hill, and see my misfortune.



Yesterday I had a brother and now he has become my groom.” The hill began to rise, so that her family and the sultan could not reach her. As soon as she stopped singing, the hill sank back down, and they tried once again to reach her and take her with them, so she started singing again : “Rise up, oh hill, and see my misfortune. Yesterday I had a mother and now she has become my mother in law.” The hill rose again, and her family and the sultan could not reach her. When Haina stopped singing, the hill sank back down, and they tried once again to catch her, so again she began to sing : “Rise up, oh hill, and see my misfortune. Yesterday I had a father and now he has become my father in law.” When Haina stopped singing for good, the hill sank back down, and her family took her home and began getting her ready for the wedding.

Haina asked them to bring her younger brother, with whom she wanted to speak. When he came to her, she told him : “Listen brother, they are about to start combing my hair and decorating my hands with henna. Take the comb without letting anyone see you and run away. If they ask you to give it back, tell them that you won’t let them have it until they bring me to you. As soon as I get there, we will run away together.”

They both agreed to this plan, so the brother passed by his family, took the comb, and ran away. When they went to try to get it back, he told them : “You

won't get the comb until you bring my sister Haina." When they brought her, Haina was able to escape with her brother, and by the grace of God, they got on the magic comb and rode it across the river to a distant land. They visited one country after another and traveled a great distance, and no one in their country knew where they had gone.

They were still on their way when the sun began to set, and they came upon the house of a witch. When they knocked on her door, she opened and said to Haina : "What has brought you here on this night, my child? What happened to you?" Haina told her what had happened, saying : "I was going to have to marry my brother, so I ran away. First one thing happened and then another..."



The witch gave them something to eat and allowed them to spend the night at her house. On the following morning as they were getting ready to resume their journey, she warned them : “On your way you will come across seven springs. Do not drink from the first spring, because whoever drinks from it will turn into a lion. And do not throw trash into it, or it will come back and stick to your faces. Whoever drinks from the second spring will turn into a pig. Do not pollute its water, or you will be deformed and grow tails. Whoever drinks from the third spring will turn into a snake, and if you wash your hair in it, you will lose it. Whoever drinks from the fourth spring will turn into a sheep, and if you waste its water, your legs will turn into camel’s legs. Whoever drinks from the fifth spring will turn into a bull, and if you pour out its water you will lose the power of speech. Whoever drinks from the sixth spring will turn into a little gazelle, and if you wash your clothes in it you will be struck with leprosy. When you reach the seventh spring you may drink from it and use its water to wash up, but do not defecate near it, as there is a latrine nearby. But if you do that anyway, you will lose your sight.”

While they were on the way, the brother got thirsty and wanted to drink from every spring they passed, but each time his sister Haina would warn him, saying : “You don’t want to turn into one of the animals the witch told us about.” The brother tried to be patient, but when they reached the sixth spring, he was very thirsty and thought of a trick to use in order to be able to take a drink. He took off one of his shoes and moved some distance away from his sister, then he said to her : “One of my shoes came off, so I’m going back to get it.” Haina said : “No, brother, I know that you’re trying to play a trick on

me. You're going to go back and drink from the spring, and if you do you'll turn into a little gazelle." He said that he would not go back to the spring and convinced her to let him go back to get his shoe. Then he bent down next to the spring and began to drink, and suddenly he turned into a little gazelle. As Haina waited for him, he approached from behind, speaking with the voice of a gazelle : "Maa, maa." Haina became angry and said to him : "This is what the witch warned us about, and I told you that you were going back to drink from the spring. That is what you did, so now you have turned into a gazelle."

Haina was upset and did not know what to do. The two of them continued their way until they came to a garden that belonged to another sultan, not their brother. They sat down next to a date palm tree and Haina was hungry, so she climbed to the top of the tree, leaving her brother the little gazelle next to the trunk. She began eating some dates and throwing some down to her brother. Then the sultan's hunters approached, and as soon as they saw Haina up in the tree, they were dazzled by her beauty. They went back and reported to the sultan, saying : "Give us your pledge of protection and we will give you some news." The sultan gave them his pledge and they told him that there was a beautiful young woman up in a palm tree in his garden, and a little gazelle next to the trunk of the tree. The sultan ordered them to bring the young woman to him immediately, so they went to fetch her from the palm tree, but she refused to come down. They tried everything they could think of, but to no avail. They caught her brother the little gazelle in order to take him to the sultan, hoping that she would follow them, but she did not. Then they began chopping at the tree with an axe, and the tree started to lean over little by little. By the time



they heard the call to the afternoon prayer, the tree was about to fall over, but Haina called out : “Be strong, my palm tree, be strong.” By the grace of God, the palm tree stood up straight as if nothing at all had happened to it. The servants kept trying for three whole days, determined to bring the young woman to the sultan, because they knew that they would be punished if they failed to carry out the sultan’s order.

They went to see an old lady who lived in the village and told her : “There is a young woman sitting in a palm tree in the sultan’s garden, and the sultan has ordered us to bring her to him. If we fail to do so he will punish us, so we have come to ask for your help.” The old woman said to them : “Is that all? I can get her to come down from the tree.” The servants asked her how she would do that, and she replied : “You will see, I am the one who will get her down.”

The old lady brought some cooking utensils and started to prepare couscous near the palm tree. Then she tipped over the plates and everything else, so Haina said to her from the top of the tree : “That’s not the way to do it, Auntie, that’s not the way to do it.” The old woman said : “My child, I am old and sick, and my eyesight is weak. Please come down and help me.”

Haina said : “If I come down, the hunters will take me to the sultan.” The old woman said : “Just come down for a minute, and then you can go right back up.”

Haina felt sorry for the old woman, so she came down to help her with the cooking. While she was doing that, the old woman sewed her dress to Haina’s



dress, so when Haina finished cooking and tried to go back up the tree, she found herself stuck there.

The soldiers came and took her to the sultan, who upon seeing her immediately asked what had happened to her. When she told him her story, the sultan asked her to marry him, and she accepted. They got married, and after some time Haina became pregnant.

The sultan had already married three other women before he married Haina. One day the sultan said to Haina before going out : “Do not trust my other wives, if they ask you to go out with them, do not go.” Haina agreed to follow his advice, and the sultan left her to go hunting. The sultan’s other wives came to Haina and said : “He used to do the same thing with us. Come outside with us and don’t pay any attention to the sultan, because the day will come when you are no longer of any value to him. Come along with us.” They finally convinced Haina, and she went along with them.

The other wives thought that the little gazelle was just an animal, but it was really Haina’s brother, and he was watching them. The women had covered a well with grass, and they told Haina to sit on it. When she did she fell into the well.

When the sultan returned he asked where his wife was, they told him : “It is not proper for such a woman with no family to sit among us. All we know is that she has left.”



Upon hearing this, the sultan became angry and worried.

Haina's brother, the little gazelle was with a flock being taken care of by one of the sultan's herdsman. When the sultan's wives got rid of Haina they wanted to get rid of him as well. They started boiling the water, sharpening the knives, and preparing the ropes in order to slaughter him. When he saw this, he approached the well and called out : "Haina my sister, the water is boiling, the knives are sharpened, and the ropes are ready, and there is no escape for your brother."

Haina replied from the bottom of the well : "My brother little gazelle, there is also no escape for me. I am here at the bottom of the well with my sons, Hassan and Hussain."

The herdsman saw what was going on and went to inform the sultan, saying : "Sir, the little gazelle I am taking care of with the other animals went up to the well and started talking to it."

On the following day, the sultan went out and heard what the gazelle was saying when he went up to the well and repeated what he had said the day before : "Haina my sister, the water is boiling, the knives are sharpened, and the ropes are ready, and there is no escape for your brother." From the bottom of the well, his sister would reply : "My brother the gazelle, there is also no escape for me. I am here at the bottom of the well with my sons, Hassan and Hussain."



The sultan called his tribesman and ordered them to pull out from the well whatever was in it. They carried out the sultan's orders, and by the grace of God they found Haina and pulled her out along with her two sons. God had protected her until she gave birth to two sons.

The sultan asked her what had happened and how, and remind her : “Didn't I tell you not to go with them?” She told him what had happened and what the other wives had done to her. The sultan said : “Now you may ask for whatever you wish, including their punishment.”

She said : “My wish is for you to build a hammam for the women, so they can wash their hair without falling into the misfortune that happened to me. And the punishment for your wives is that they will have to work in that hammam the rest of their lives for no pay.”

The sultan carried out her wishes and Haina ruled over the country with him. Her brother turned back into a human, and they all lived happily ever after.

This story of mine has been passed on from valley to valley and





Tunisian Stories



Aouichicha and the Source of Water



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Tunisian heritage of El Kef and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).
This tale was written with a group of women volunteers as part of a participatory writing workshop organized by the measure « Maghreb storytellers, actors of change for water resources preservation» in March 2017 in El Kef. A group of 07 participants contributed to the writing of this story namely :
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It is said that in a remote village there once lived a young woman of graceful stature with delicate features and long silken hair. One day she left her house and went to a spring outside the village to fill her jar with cool pure water. While on her way, she saw a strange creature that she had never seen before, and she couldn't tell if it was a human being or an animal. For several months she had heard the villagers talking about the creature, to which they had given the name "Aouichicha". She was frightened, so she started walking slowly, taking small steps and ready to flee should the strange creature attack her.

Aouichicha would stand in front of the source and not let anyone drink from it or fill a jar or bucket with water. Even the animals were afraid to approach the source, and would run away instead. No one could stay very long in this place, despite the beautiful scenery, dense trees, and abundant waterfall. Anyone who climbed up to the spring faced great difficulty, because it was at the top of the mountain and the path leading to it was rocky and uneven. Despite what the villagers thought, the lovely young woman was brave and confident enough to reach the source of abundantly flowing cool water, in order to quench her thirst and fill her jar, and then to return home safely.



But on this occasion, something unexpected happened, as Aouichicha suddenly appeared from among the trees and started running after her, while she cried and screamed. The only means of escape she could find, was to climb a tall tree and cling to its branches, until someone came to rescue her from Aouichicha.

While the young woman was in this state of fear and apprehension, a handsome young man from the village passed by on his way to the spring, to let his cattle drink from it. Suddenly he noticed that the herd were restless. He tried to keep the herd together, but the cows kept running away. He sensed that something unnatural was happening in that place, and started looking left and right, then raised his eyes to the tree and saw the beautiful young woman in it. He called to her from distance, saying : “Hey! What are you doing in this forsaken place, and how did you climb such a tall tree?”





The young man turned and saw a strange creature chasing his cattle in every direction, so he moved back a little and tried to bring his herd back together and move them away from the place of danger. Then he turned toward the young woman and said : “Don’t move, I’ll be back as soon as I have my herd in a safe place. Stay where you are and hold on tight to the branches.”

On the way back, the young man decided to get rid of Aouichicha and return the spring to the villagers, as no one was able to benefit from its abundant pure water. Upon arriving in the village, he got on his horse and rode among the houses, calling out to the owners and asking them to meet in the village square for an important matter, and soon the villagers gathered to find out what this important matter was.

The young man stood up and said : “Aouichicha has taken control of the spring we use for drinking and watering our livestock and fields, and we are now faced with hunger and thirst. We have allowed him to take it over without doing a thing to prevent it. This wicked creature has taken advantage of our lack of attention and negligence when it comes to our water and fields so as to take control of the spring and to prevent us and our livestock from approaching it to use its abundant pure water. The time has come for us to take back the spring, to start using its water more wisely, and to banish Aouichicha from the land.

As soon as he finished speaking, the villagers raised their voices in support of his idea and encouraging him to take back the spring. Everyone wanted to do something to help conserve water: one person wanted to build a cistern, someone else an irrigation canal, another one a well, and still another a water basin. Soon a group of people was on its way to the spring, bursting with enthusiasm and full of determination, carrying along with them construction tools including axes, shovels, and spades. People were ready to contribute with cement, sand, and everything needed for their building projects.

As soon as they arrived at the spring, they began working diligently, and one could see the sweat dripping from their brows. They supported each other in their work and when they got tired, one of them would start singing to ease the weariness of the others. The group leader suggested that they build a large reservoir out of reinforced concrete and connect it to an irrigation canal, in order to collect and distribute rainwater. That way, if there was a drought and

the spring dried up, they would have a reserve of water to supply the village until the spring started flowing again.

They kept on working tirelessly, with one person carrying stones on his shoulder, another building a wall, and still another applying cement on the walls. The reservoir began to take shape, the irrigation canals were dug, and a tall cistern was completed, all of which would be admired by future generations.

Aouichicha had been watching the workers from a distance, and his heart was filled with rage as she realized there was no longer a place for her in this land. The people had come to appreciate the importance of water and learned to use it wisely, without wasting it as they had in the past. Aouichicha fled, never to return, and the villagers were liberated from her evil forever.



The young man then rode on his horse to where the young woman was and helped her to climb down from the tree. As soon as her feet touched the ground, she walked proudly to the spring and began to wash up after a long day of toil and trouble that she had spent watching the workers build a number of structures to improve the use of water from the beautiful spring.



When the work was finished, the young man put her on his horse and returned her to her family. The people were filled with joy as a result of the splendid



structures they had built, which lasted for many years and were used by many future generations.



The Children and the Well



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Tunisian heritage of Kerkennah islands and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

This tale was written with a group of women volunteers as part of a participatory writing workshop organized by the measure « Maghreb storytellers, actors of change for water resources preservation » in March 2017 in Kerkennah.

A group of 06 participants contributed to the writing of this story namely :

Mrs Raja Allouche, Fatma Bechikha, Omezzine Ben Amor, Ismahène Ben Hamida, Rahma Ben Hamida et Aida Ghram

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The follow-up and direction of the realization of this tale was ensured by:

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Once upon a time there was a tall and beautiful woman named Aisha, who was diligent in her work inside and outside the home. She worked with her husband at the farm and took care of her three children.

When her husband died, she had to take care of the large farm by herself, in the middle of a spacious meadow. The farm had many fine crops, but it had no faucet or irrigation canal to provide water. There were some wells, but the water table was far below the surface and could only be reached with great difficulty, the water sources were very deep underground.

This hardworking woman would get up early in the morning to water the crops and livestock and feed the chickens. She considered farming to be her whole life and was the sole provider for her children, but she neglected to teach them how to use water wisely and conserve it for the future.

As time went by she became exhausted by the daily burdens and difficulties of her life, as she watered the plants and animals and fed her children. She got very tired from having to fetch water from the well and carry it in buckets from one place to another.



Her children were very spoiled and took no responsibility for their mother or the crops and animals. They spent the entire day playing and wasting water, and when they found something in their way they would throw it into the well, which contaminated the water and made it unsafe to drink.

Whenever things got very difficult for Aisha and she felt overwhelmed by the world, she would go and sit at the edge of the well and complain to it. She would tell the well about her problems and everything that happened to her because of her thoughtless children, who wasted water without knowing the negative effect it had on the deep water table or the diseases caused by polluted water. Each time she went there she would confide in the well and tell



it her problems, hoping to find a sympathetic listener, even if it was only an inanimate object.

One day as she was unburdening her heart to the well, it spoke to her, saying : “Dear lady, the truth is that your young children are not to blame.” Although she was astonished to hear the well speak to her, she remained calm and asked: “What do you mean?” The well replied : “The main reason for my saying this is the way you raised them. You spoiled them and failed to give them the necessary advice on how to conserve water, and as a result they developed bad habits. Now is the time to teach them a lesson and get them back on the right path.” Aisha replied : “I agree completely, and God willing things will turn out well.”



One day Aisha's daughter Warda went to the well with her brothers. They sat at the edge of the well having something to eat and drink, and when they finished they threw the scraps into the well. As soon as they did this, they heard a loud and thunderous voice, which they couldn't tell whether or not it was a human voice, coming from inside the well. The children quickly ran away as far as they could, but the water followed them and soon spread over the whole farm, encircling them from all sides. There was no place to escape and they could go neither forward nor backward. They saw that the garbage they had dumped into the well was floating everywhere, making the farm look like a garbage dump.

The well told them : "I am going to drown all of you today and I will not spare you, because you have caused me great harm by throwing garbage into me and blocking the springs that provide me with water. My water is no longer fresh, but has become bitter and unfit to use for people, animals, or even plants. You don't know the dangers of your actions, which will come back to haunt you as diseases and epidemics spread. If you persist with this bad behavior, things will keep getting worse and worse, until the day comes when you will suffer violent hunger and thirst, God created every living thing out of water."

The children said : "We beg you to forgive us and promise that we will not repeat our past mistakes. If you will show us what we have to do, we will do it right away. Please let us go so we can return safe and sound to our mother."



The well replied : “I will forgive you this time, but before I do, you must go to your mother and ask her to forgive you, because you have caused her much trouble and she is exhausted. You must obey her because she has your best interest at heart, and you must help her both at home and on the farm, by watering the crops and animals, feeding the chickens, or any other jobs that need to be done. And when you want to wash your hands, I recommend that you take your pitcher to the waterwheel and pour the water into its basin. In this way the person benefits by washing his hands, and the tree benefits from the water that was poured out without being wasted. That is how to use water in the best possible way.”

The children looked at each other in astonishment, and then at the water retreating little by little, until it returned to the place it had come from. But there was still garbage everywhere, like a witness testifying to the children’s carelessness and neglect over many years of God’s greatest gift to his creatures, which is water. The children started to collect the garbage, which consisted of paper, food scraps, plastic bags, and other things, and before long the place was clean enough to sit in and enjoy. When they had finished their work, they saw their mother smiling with a look of satisfaction in her eyes and happiness on her face.



The Sultan and the Elephant



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Tunisian heritage of Kerkennah islands and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

This tale was written with a group of women volunteers as part of a participatory writing workshop organized by the measure « Maghreb storytellers, actors of change for water resources preservation » in March 2017 in Kerkennah.

A group of 06 participants contributed to the writing of this story namely :

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The follow-up and direction of the realization of this tale was ensured by:

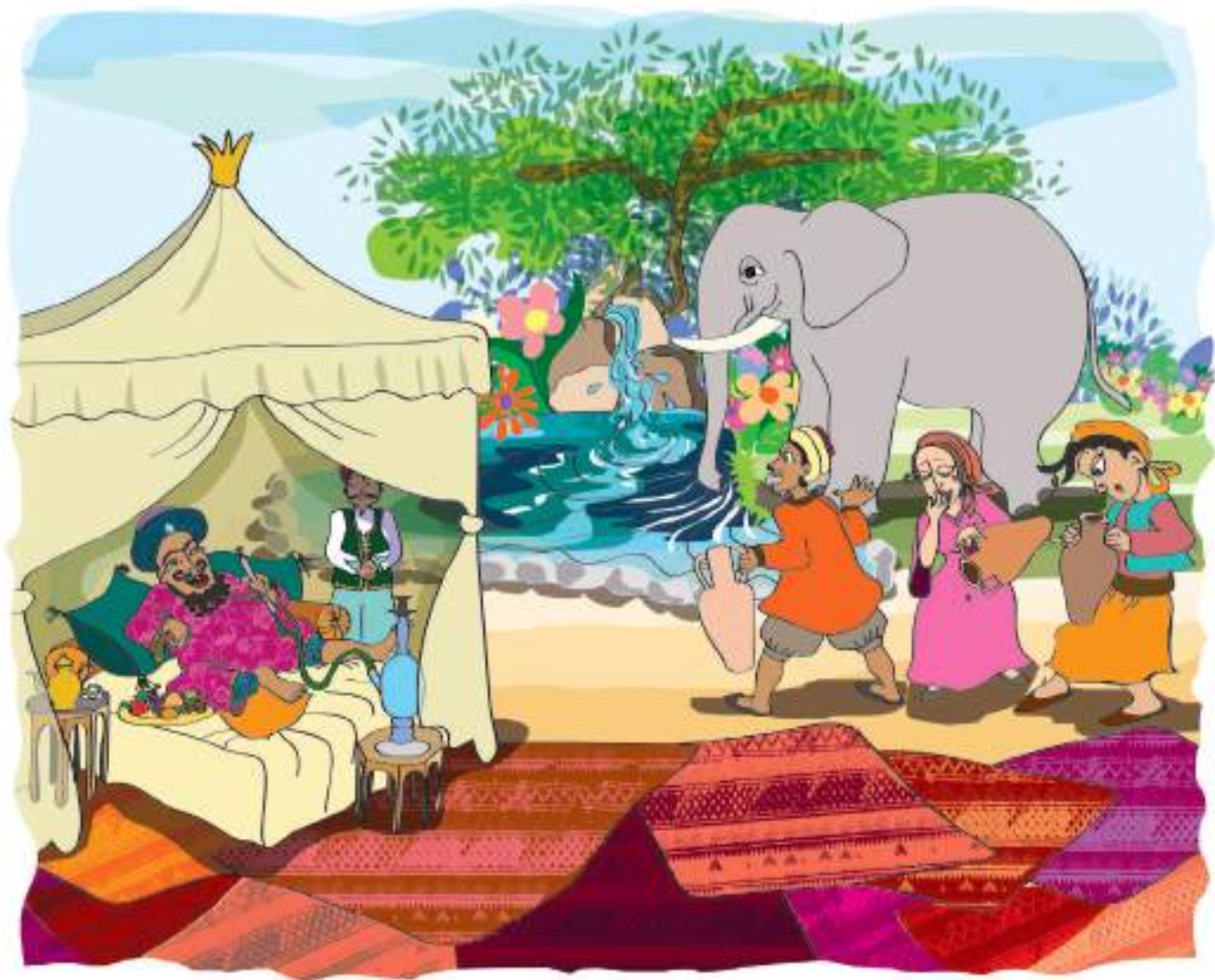
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Once upon a time, there was a sultan who had an elephant that he kept in a pen, as well as a spring that was used to provide drinking water to the people, irrigate their fields, and water their animals. The sultan made an agreement with the local inhabitants that they would take turns using the spring, one day for the people to fill their buckets and one day for the elephant to drink. But as there was not enough water available for everyone, the people remained in a state of hunger and thirst. They agreed to go see the sultan and complain to him, but they were afraid and lost their determination to do so. How could they confront the sultan and complain about the elephant that he owns? After all, he was the one who gave the order to let the elephant drink from the spring, and they knew that in this case he would be both the adversary and the judge.



The people complained secretly and whispered to each other, asking if it was reasonable for the elephant to drink for a whole day, while all the people have only one day when they can use the water to drink and water their plants and trees? Where would they get the water to prepare their food and water their animals? And how would they have enough to eat when the soil had dried up, the leaves on the trees had turned yellow, and the crops had withered? Their lives and the lives of their children and animals all are depending on water.

They asked each other what was this elephant that had caused them so much grief, roaming around the land with its enormous trunk that made the spring go dry by sucking up its water. Finally, they agreed to go see the wise man, a white-haired old man with a halo of light respected by all because of his wisdom, sound advice, and the many books he had read.



Their leader, who was called Ayyadi the Camel Driver, approached the wise man and greeted him, saying : “We have come to you in order to find a solution to our problem concerning the sultan’s elephant, which has been set free to wander around the land. It has emptied the spring of water so there is none left for us to drink, our crops have dried up and lost their leaves, and our animals are dying of thirst.”

The wise man said : “Listen to me, people, why are you looking for a solution when it is so easily within your reach?”

The man replied : “How can you say that, oh wise man, when we have only one day to irrigate the land we have tilled, water the animals we have bought and



the crops we have planted, and the trees we have nurtured? Is this insignificant amount of water enough to cook our food, bathe, and clean our property?”

The wise man said : “Does it make sense to waste all the water that you get in one full day?”

One of the group replied : “How could one day’s portion be enough for more than one day?”

The wise man said : “who wastes a drop of water complains of thirst. If you had followed the example of our ancestors, you would be reaping the benefits now. Did they not build dams and cisterns and dig irrigation canals in order to conserve the water that fell from the sky? I remember that during periods of drought, we would rely on the water we had saved up, which was enough for drinking, washing, and irrigating the fields. We always tried not to waste a single drop, which could be used to water a mint, basil, or jasmine plant.”

Ayyadi the Camel Drive said: “What is the solution now?”



The wise man said : “I will not go in your place to discuss with the sultan. It is better for all of you to come with me. That way, everyone can state his opinion and have his say.”

When they reached the castle, the sultan ordered his chief minister to find out what the uproar was about. The minister asked them why they had come, and Ayyadi the Camel Drive said that they had come to meet the sultan.

Once in front of the group of people, the sultan asked what was the reason of their request to meet him . The wise man said : “Long may you live, o Sultan, we have come about the elephant ...”

The sultan shouted out : “What about the elephant, did something happen to it?”

Everyone remained silent, fearing the sultan’s reaction owing to his anger with them, and no one was able to utter a single word. The sultan repeated his question, with sparks flying out of his eyes, and as everyone in the group was afraid to speak, a heavy silence prevailed.

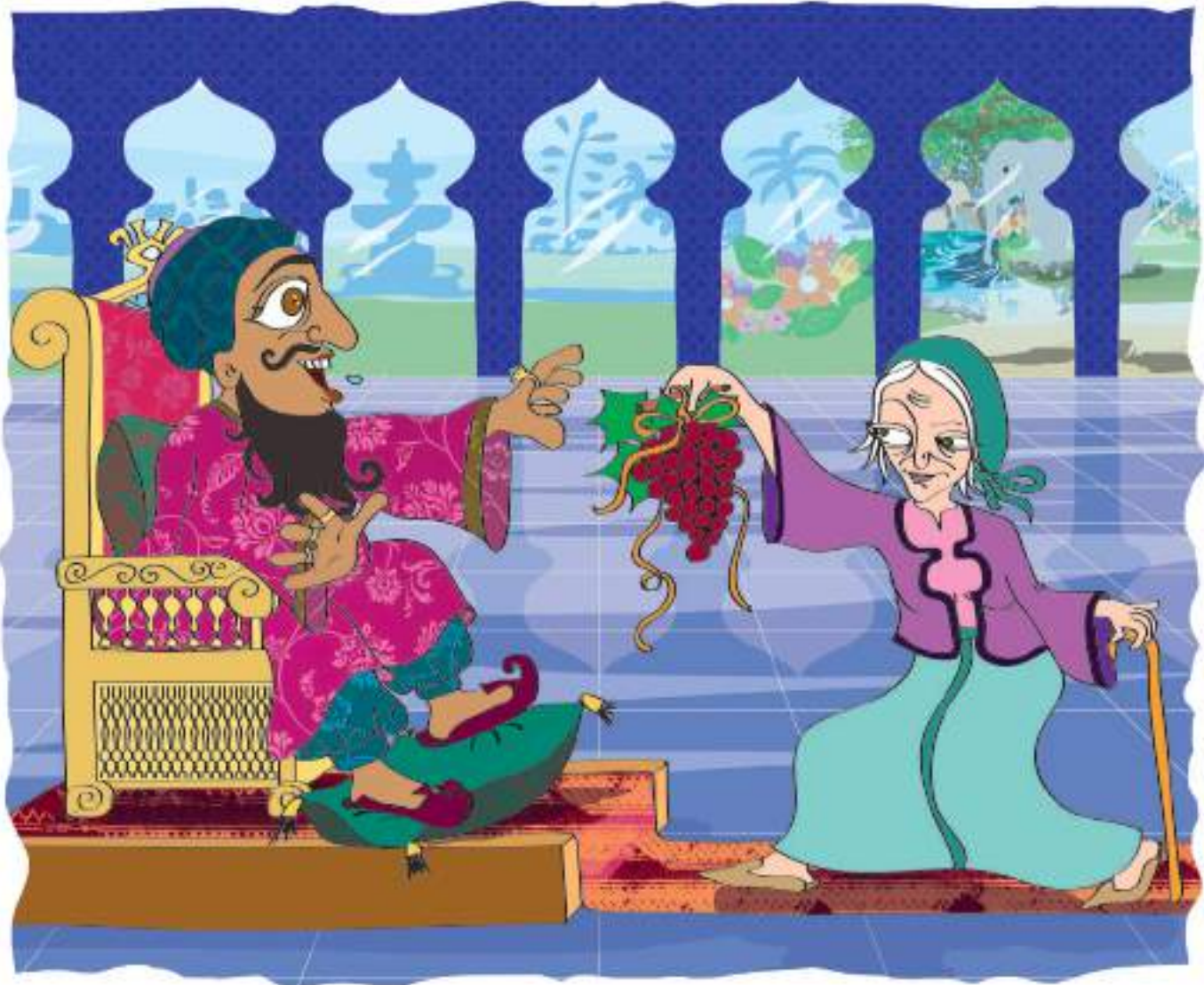
Ayyadi the Camel Drive hesitated, aware of the danger, but gathered his courage and said : “Sir, the elephant is lonely and distressed, so we thought we would ask you to bring a female elephant to keep it company.”



The sultan laughed and said : “That is a simple matter. We will bring a female elephant so that it doesn’t stay lonely and distressed, as you mentioned.”

The group returned from the sultan’s palace feeling dejected and angry. They had wanted to get rid of the elephant, and instead there was going to be another one!”

When they returned home, their female leader Aziza said : “Leave things to me and don’t worry about what happened. She went immediately to a grapevine in her garden and cut a bunch of delicious looking golden grapes. She went to see the sultan and offered him the grapes, and then returned home. The next day she did the same thing, and when the sultan tasted them, he asked his minister which field the grapes were from, as he had never tasted any like them. The minister said that he did not know.



On the third day the sultan missed Aziza when she did not come to see him, so he sent his guards to bring her. When she arrived, he asked her about the grapes, and she said that the elephant had eaten them. The sultan was astonished and said : “How can that be?” She said : “The elephant drank the water that I use to water the grapevine, leaving none for us to drink. The land has become parched and the trees are no longer bearing fruit. The only thing left are these two clusters of grapes.”

The sultan called his chief engineer and ordered him to build a basin and fill it with water, from which the elephant would drink one day a week, and on the other days the local inhabitants would use it to allow their land to become fertile and the trees to bear delicious fruits once again.



The Water Bearer



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Tunisian heritage of Kerkennah islands and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).

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Once upon a time there was a jewelry merchant who lived with his wife and children a life of comfort and ease. God had blessed him with two sons and a lovely daughter who was extremely well behaved and organized. His wife would never rest and spent the whole day cleaning the house, doing the laundry, and washing the dishes; using water to such an extent that it seemed wasteful.

She moved from one room to another with a bucket in her hand, leaking water from the well, which she would pour out in various rooms with no thought or planning. What made matters worse was that her two sons began to imitate her in everything she did. They grew up with the habit of wasting water, and one could find them amusing themselves with it all the time. They would fill up and empty the pool and swim in it like a pair of ducks, while the water spilled into the trenches and from there outside the house, forming rivulets of water that were of no benefit to man, beast, or tree. But the lovely daughter was very different from her brothers, as she knew how to conserve water and use



it wisely. She would carry her things from one place to another, trying to keep them from getting wet.

Whenever the father entered the house, he would notice the careless way in which his wife and sons used water. He would become angry and protest to them about the way they misused it, advising them not to waste this precious source of all life on earth. But his wife would show her indifference by saying : “Water will never run out because the rain constantly replenishes it, no matter how dry the soil becomes. There is no need to economize with it.” He in turn would reply :

“There is a limit to cleanliness, and going to extremes leads to waste. Anything that exceeds a certain limit ends up having the opposite effect.”

She would insist on her view, considering him to be incapable of understanding such matters, despite his expertise at his job, which consisted of making gold and silver bracelets. The poor man would leave the room, unable to find anyone to listen to him or heed his advice.



One day as the merchant was crossing the market on the way to his shop, he saw a young water bearer carrying a jar full of water on his shoulder. The young man greeted him saying : “Sir, would you like a drink of cool water before you start your work this morning?” The merchant replied : “That’s a good idea, son, God bless you.” Then he took a drink from a clean clay pot and continued on his way to work.

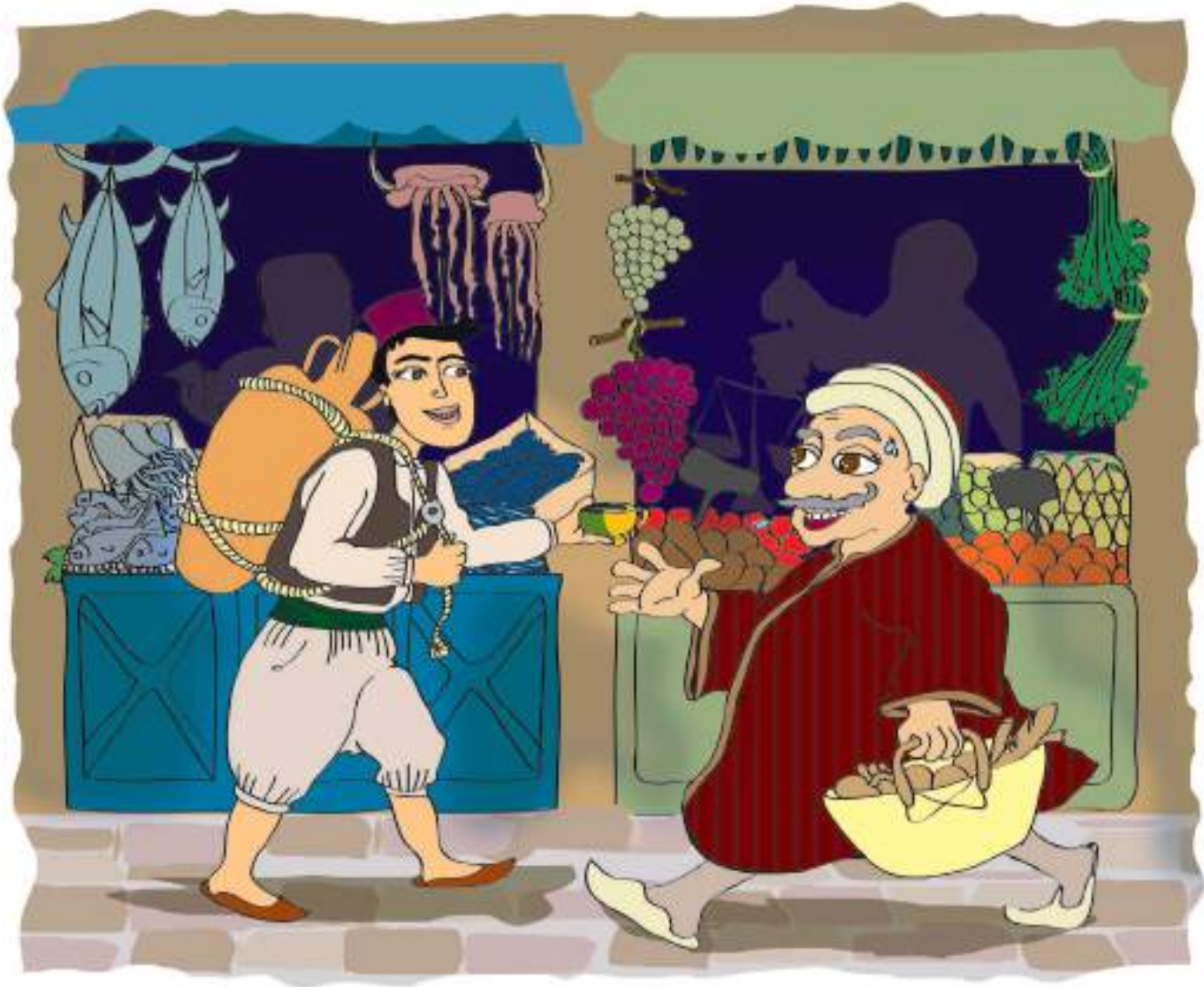
Whenever the merchant passed by this spot he would find the water bearer offering water to those walking by in the hot weather, who would ask God to bless him and grant him long life. This aroused his curiosity and he decided to ask the young man why he did this :

Tell me, son, do you offer water to people free of charge, or do they pay you for it?”

The young man said : “I give water to people passing through the market in order to quench their thirst in this heat. If someone gives me money, I thank him for the material gain. And if someone just asks God to bless me, then I have gained spiritually. So in either case I receive a gift.”

The merchant said : “Why don’t you learn the gold and silversmith trade, so you could be secure in the world and make a lot of money?”

The water bearer replied : “If you want to talk about silver, my older brother inherited some from my father, and my oldest brother inherited gold from him.”



The merchant said : “And what did your father leave for you in his will? The water bearer replied : “He left me something more important than gold and silver. He left me the wells, and he advised me to conserve water and encourage people to appreciate its value and use it wisely.”

The merchant thought of the way water was wasted in his own house, and how this young man had learned to appreciate the importance of water, and dedicated his life to teaching this lesson to others. He thought for a minute and then said to the water bearer : “I would like to invite you to come to my house tomorrow as a guest to have a meal with my family.”

The young man was surprised and thought to himself : “Why would this rich man invite me to his house, when I am just a poor water bearer who can be of no use to him?” But in the end he decided to accept the merchant’s invitation.

The merchant returned home and told his wife that a guest was coming, which made her very happy at the thought of having one of the country’s dignitaries honor them with a visit. She got up early in the morning with her daughter and began preparing all sorts of tasty dishes and ordering many special items.

After the midday prayer, she heard a knock on the door and hurried from her room to welcome her husband and their distinguished guest. When she opened the door, her husband entered with a young man who looked poverty-stricken and was carrying a jar on his shoulder. She stepped back in shock, but then got control of herself and reached out a soft hand to greet him. At the same time,



her husband told her to bring out the food for the young man, and she sluggishly headed for the kitchen.

Shortly thereafter, she called out to her husband in a reproachful tone, saying : “Who is this miserable wretch that you have invited today? Why didn’t you spare us the trouble of preparing all this food?” The husband replied : “Perhaps this young man brings us a blessing that dignitaries do not possess. Bring us some water to wash off the dust of the road.” In a little while she brought a bucket that was leaking, and when she looked at the water she saw that it was murky, so she poured it out on the ground. Then she drew some more water from the well and poured it out as well. She did this several more times, while the young man looked on in astonishment at the way she was wasting water. Then he said : “Ma’am, may I ask you why you poured out the water on the ground and wasted it, instead of using it to water the grapevine or mint plant, which are dry and wilted and need to be watered?” She handed him the first bucket, and he went to wash his hands where the mint plants were growing. Then he filled some more buckets and watered the thirsty mulberry trees in the corners of the house. Then the merchant also took the bucket and did what his guest had done, saying to his wife : “This is the way we should use water in this house. For years I have been telling you to use water wisely.”



His wife was annoyed at what the guest had done and reluctantly accepted her husband's words. In the meanwhile the daughter had prepared the table and placed on it all sorts of delicious foods.

When the young man saw the girl dressed in fine clothing, wearing brilliant jewelry, and looking beautiful, he was taken by her, and she also felt an attraction for him. After they had finished eating and having tea, the young man got up, put the jar on his shoulder, and asked permission to leave. The merchant accompanied him to the door and his wife followed saying : "Now that we have met each other, if I need some cool water, I'll buy it from you."

As the days and months passed by, the merchant got to know the water bearer and they became good friends. He frequently invited him to his house, where he would praise him in front of his family and remind them to use water wisely. One day the water bearer met the merchant and asked him to marry him his daughter. The father was happy to hear this, and said that he would agree on the condition of consulting with his wife and daughter.

When the merchant discussed the subject of his daughter's engagement to the water bearer with his wife, she flatly refused. After a while she turned the decision over to her daughter, expecting that she would refuse to marry this young man carrying a jar of water on his shoulder all day long.

But to her great surprise, the girl was very fond of this young man and appreciated his wisdom and rectitude. She felt that they shared the same views and values, including the importance of conserving water and using it wisely. She consented to the marriage, which served as a lesson to the wasteful wife that she would never forget as long as she lived. The water bearer and the beautiful young woman lived happily ever after, simply and without pretension.



The two Brothers and the Dove



This tale is inspired by traditional tales from the Tunisian heritage of El Kef and is part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia).
This tale was written with a group of women volunteers as part of a participatory writing workshop organized by the measure « Maghreb storytellers, actors of change for water resources preservation» in March 2017 in El Kef. A group of 07 participants contributed to the writing of this story namely :
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In a rural cottage in the village of Oum Touyour, a woman named Aisha lived with her two sons. The younger son was named Mane and the elder one was named Saleh.

One day while they were sitting and having tea, the mother said to her sons : “Go to the mountain and gather some firewood, instead of sitting at home doing nothing.” At first, they paid her no attention, but she repeated her request until the boys reluctantly got up and headed for the mountain, climbing up over large rocks along twisted and uneven paths. They kept going for several hours until they got lost and could no longer find the path leading back home. They kept walking without knowing where they were going or where to find the path that would take them back to where they had started from. They were getting very hungry and thirsty, but they kept moving forward, without knowing that they were going into the wrong direction and getting further and further away from home.



After a while they saw a pool of water between the mountain grasses, but its water had turned green from having been stagnant for a long time. Mane said : “Thank God that we have finally found the water we were looking for, after we almost died from thirst.” They were about to take a drink when Saleh grabbed his brother’s hand and said, “Don’t drink this, it’s contaminated water and it’s not safe to drink.” Mane said : “Let me drink because I’m dying of thirst, and either way I’ll be dead, whether I drink it or not.” Saleh replied : “Don’t you see the insects swarming around the edges of the pool, Mane, are you crazy?” Then he said : “Come on, let’s keep going. We’ll surely find a spring with clean water to drink, instead of this contaminated water.”

The brothers continued on their way without stopping, but unfortunately, they did not find a drop of water to drink. In the middle of the intense summer heat,



they were overcome by thirst and exhaustion to the point that they nearly lost consciousness.

While they were suffering, a white whirlwind appeared in the distance, spinning at high speed and rising into the sky. Before long, this strange whirlwind slowed down and came to rest on the ground in front of them. Out of a cloud of mist a beautiful woman emerged, looking like an angel, and said to them : “I am at your service, young men. Ask of me what you wish, and I shall grant it at once.” Saleh said : “I want a drink of water, only a drink of water, because I’m dying of thirst.”

She replied : “I’m sorry, I can help you with anything you wish except for providing water, because that depends on you. It requires more effort to find



water, and I do not encourage young people to be lazy.”

The two brothers set out once again to search for water from any source to quench their thirst, but they returned without success. Once again the angelic woman appeared to them and said : “Why have you returned unsuccessful? Didn’t you find a stream or spring?” They replied : “We found that even the streams had dried up, and there is no way for us to drink. Please give us at least enough to stay alive, as we are dying of hunger.” In an instant there appeared a table laden with delicious foods of all kinds: honey and couscous, fresh bread and salty cheese. They ate so much that they got indigestion, but there was no water on the table, not even a drop to drink, and they were still as thirsty as they were before, or even thirstier, because they had eaten salty food. Saleh looked at the woman and said once again : “Thank you for your kindness, but please bring us some water, because we are dying of thirst.” Then she took a dove out of the folds of her clothing and let it fly away into the sky, while at the same time singing :

*O little dove who flew up into the sky
We’re going to tell on you
We’re going to tell on you, little flower
If he comes, just tell him so.*

Then the dove returned and landed on the woman’s delicate shoulder, and she said : “I love this dove more than anything on earth, and I’m afraid that she may die if she doesn’t get some water, as she too has been suffering from



thirst for a long time. All you have to do is find some water for her, and I will be very happy with you.” Mane replied with a faint voice : “We couldn’t find any water for ourselves; how are we going to get any for this dove?” She said : “Very well, just wait a little while.” Then she held up a laser rod with a blue ray coming out of it, and suddenly the clouds opened up and the forest was illuminated by a bright light.

The brothers watched in astonishment as a bucket of pure water appeared before them. They reached out their hands to take a drink but found that the bucket had a hole in it. Saleh said : “Let’s give the dove some water first.” But when they lifted up the bucket, the water had leaked out of the hole and it was empty. Frustrated and not knowing what to do, they looked towards the woman and saw that she was sitting on a luminous throne suspended between the earth and the sky. She told them : “Tell me what you were looking for in this empty mountain forest.” They said : “Our mother sent us to gather firewood for the clay oven in which she bakes bread and cooks food.” She replied in an angry tone : “I saw the two of you doing nothing all day long, wasting time in a useless way.” Mane said : “That’s not right. We always tilled the dry soil, hoping that God would bless us with rain, and we dug deep wells in the hope of finding water.” The more Mane kept talking, the thirstier he became, and the same thing was happening with Saleh. She replied : “Why didn’t you build a cistern to store water in when it rains, so that during dry periods you would still have a supply? I saw that you failed to build a catch basin, reservoir, or irrigation canal, but instead relied solely on rainwater. That is a big mistake.” Then, as if remembering something important, she went on to say : “One day



when I was hovering above the fields below this mountain, I saw some areas that were lush and green like a paradise on earth, and I saw a flat plain with something that looked like a vault. It was white and had three openings and three doors on top, but I don't know what it was.”

Saleh jumped up and said : “Yes, I remember, it's a big reservoir. Where did you see it?” She replied : “I saw it in a place where the farmers know how to conserve water and use it wisely, as it is a blessing bestowed upon them by God. All you have to do is rely on your expertise in this area, roll up your sleeves, and set to work without holding a grudge, to do what they have done.” She went on to say : “But now my little dove is very thirsty. Take her with you so that both of you and she can drink. Take this bucket with you as well, go up the mountain, and look to the right.”

As Saleh hurried towards the mountain, he saw what seemed like an endless river with water sparkling in the sunshine. His eyes filled with tears as he cried out : “The water is right in front of us and we're nearly dying of thirst!” Then the woman told them : “Saleh, get on my right wing, and Mane, get on my left wing. As soon as they heard this, Saleh grabbed the bucket and both of them climbed onto her wings. The angelic woman quickly took flight and carried them high into the sky, while both of them stared at the water spread out below them as far as the eye could see. Suddenly Saleh cried out : “It's Mellègue Dam, and there is the giant reservoir and the gushing source with vapor rising from it.” Then they felt themselves slowly descending until the angelic woman set them down on Mellègue Dam. Saleh let the bucket down into the deep



water, and after he raised it back up, the dove took several sips of water until her thirst was quenched, and then she spread her wings and flew high into the sky. Then Mane drank as much water as he wanted to quench his thirst before refilling the bucket and offering it to the woman, who said : “Thank you, but I do not eat or drink. Take as much water as you can to water the fields that you have tilled in front of your house, then water the thirsty trees, and do this at least once a week, because the earth is satisfied with just a little water. An almond or olive tree needs only one pot of water, but the important thing is not to forget to do it.” Suddenly Saleh saw the woman engulfed in light as she rose into the sky and vanished among the clouds.







These tales were written in 2017 in participatory training and writing workshops organized by the measure « Maghreb storytellers, actors of change for the water preservation » and integrated since 2018 to the Maghreb project of « Regional Cooperation for sustainable Management of Water Resources in the Maghreb (CREM). »

These tales are inspired by traditional tales from the intangible heritage of each region involved in the project in the Maghreb countries : Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

They are part of a series of new tales on water in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) and are considered as a tool for emancipation and enhancement of the role of women in the society using the story as a vector of messages for kids awareness in particular and the public in general for the preservation of water resources in the region. They were written by a group of women volunteers who, through the appropriation of the oral tradition, will be responsible for transmitting them to new generations.



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