

Feminine Wiliness

Once there was a shameless woman who was very clever. She lied to her husband to deceive him, so he wouldn't realize that she was going a bad way.

"Husband, husband," she said to him and embraced him, "how dear you are to me! I love you so much, I even dream about you. May I go blind, have my eyes poked out, and be cut in two if I lie to you!"

"Oh, dear wife," he said to her, "and you should know, I love you so much, if you could only look at me as I sleep!"

"My dear God," she said to him, "you, too, love me so very much! Thank you Lord! It is amazing what is happening with us. Do you know husband, why we love each other so much? The wedding never ended, that's why we love each other so much. Praise the good Lord and let Him and the wonderful Mother of God, grant that we love each other and desire each other forever. Let people say what they want about us, we don't need to listen to them. The world envies good people. Isn't that so, husband?"

"It's so, wife, may you live and be well forever! You just mind your own business, let people say whatever they want. We don't need to listen to them; we will love each other more than ever."

The old people say that men have the cross on their foreheads, but women have the cross on the backs of their heads, and that's why they can deceive men so easily. Therefore, this sister lied to her husband and deceived him with these sweet words, and did bad things right before his very eyes. Every morning she woke him up early and sent him off to the store, and brought in another man. One morning the husband was going to the store, but he had forgotten his wallet with his money, and since he had to return some money to another man, he ran back home to

fetch his wallet. As he got to the door, he saw two people in bed. He became shamed right away, he hit his chest, and he went off to the store. He sat down and began to think about it, and said to himself:

"Ah, damned woman! Oh, you Judas Iscariot! Is this the sort of love you had for me, you hugged me and kissed me with the kiss of Judas? And why did you give me your word and swear that you loved me with all your heart? Was all this to deceive me and to pull the wool over my eyes? Just wait, you whore, this evening you'll see what sort of husband I am."

The man was sitting and thinking these thoughts, and he didn't even know where he was sitting.

His wife, when she saw that her husband had seen her in bed with another man, thought it over in her mind, thinking how to get off, and what to say. At this time, an old woman, a beggar, came up, she went up to the wife and asked for alms, in the name of God.

"Hey beautiful bride, give me a piece of bread, in God's name. May you and your husband live and be healthy," the old woman said to her.

"Dear old woman, go in good health. I have a great worry. Moreover, concerning the blessing you bestow on my husband and me, I'll be alive only until this evening, and my husband will live a long life. Since I know what is going to happen to me, I don't want your blessing, old woman!" the woman said mournfully.

"Oh, daughter, daughter, what are you saying? Let the earth not hear you! Spit in your bosom against the evil eye. May the Lord not agree, that you should die so young," the woman said to her. "May God give some of my days to you. I don't agree that you should die young. Daughter, don't, don't dear, don't curse yourself, because there is nothing worse than that!"

"Oh, old woman, oh mother! The worry I have today is so big, if only I could say the

word and die on the spot where I'm standing, rather than be alive this evening when my husband kills me.

"Why is this, daughter? What are you saying? Tell me everything! Is your husband going to beat you? Tell this old woman everything so she can fix it for you, and you will see what an old hand I am!"

Eventually, after the old woman talked to her for a while, she convinced her to tell her about her misfortune.

"Here's my misfortune," the woman told her, "I have a lover, but my husband didn't know until now I was that type, that I deceived him, lied to him like the devil. However, as it's been said: everything that is done in secret will come out in the open. And really, what I've done came out in the open this morning. My lover had come to see me, and my husband, I don't know why the devil made him do it, came from the store by chance to get something. He never comes home during the day. I get him ready and tell him to go to the store early, and to stay at the store all day in order to earn money now while we're young so we'll have some in our old age. That's how I deceived him and lied to him. So today the devil brought all this out in the open, and this evening my husband is surely going to kill me! So dear old woman, that's what he intends to do. And now find me a way out if you can!"

"Aha, just as you say daughter, granny will find you a way out immediately! Just get a shirt ready for me to change into and tell me what you ate last night, and on what street is your husband's store. Tell me, and you'll see what an expert I am!"

"Oh, dear old woman, may your mouth be blessed! If you do me this kindness, it will be as if you had built a monastery. And look here, dear old woman, I'll give you not one shirt but two. Both right off the needle, still unstretched. You don't need to ask what we ate, granny; last

night we ate bread and beans, and my husband's store is at the corner of the narrow side street!"

"That's fine, young bride, now put away your scarf and get the shirts ready. But listen, here's what you'll have to do when you see your husband coming from the shop: you'll run out and wait for him at the door and you'll say to him: 'Why have you brought a guest, husband, when we have no dinner?' He'll wonder what it is you're talking about and he'll say: 'I didn't bring anyone. Where do you see me bringing anyone?' Then you'll say: 'It's the beans I ate yesterday, they've caused me to see double, husband.'"

After the old woman told the young wife what to do, she walked to the bazaar, near her husband's store, and begged alms from him:

"Hey brothers, give me a coin each, for the Lord's sake, I'm a poor woman."

"Move along, move along now old woman," the woman's husband said to her, "let the Lord give you some!"

"Indeed, the Lord will give me some, brothers, but you should give me, too. There are two of you here. May you both live well, and may your wives and everything you own be well. Come now, give me a coin each. That's not much for you? However, if I get twice two, then I'd have four, and I could buy a loaf of soft bread to eat. I don't have any teeth, I can't eat homemade bread."

"Now old woman, can't you see that there aren't two people here, so how do you expect to collect a coin from two people? Here's one coin from me, now go in good health," the man said to her.

"God bless, brother, God bless, and may your wife be healthy! And now you, brother, you give me one coin too," and she turned as if towards another man she saw in the store, "now, may your wife be healthy, what's one coin for you?"

"Listen, granny, don't play like a child. I've told you there's no one but me in the store," the man said to her.

"Oh, brother! They told me the same thing somewhere else. Now it occurs to me that it's those damned beans I ate last night, they're causing me to see double. That's the cause of it, brother, that's it! Now it occurs to me that there are several days during the year like this, if a person eats beans, then the next day he'll see double, and that's why it looks that way to me. I beg your pardon for having bothered you. Stay in good health," the woman said to him and went about her business.

That evening the man locked the store and went home angry. He thought and thought what he should do with his wife. When he got to the door, she was waiting for him, just as the old woman had told her.

"Hey, husband, what were you thinking when you brought a guest with you? Surely you know we have no supper, huh husband? If you wanted to bring a guest, you should have told me to prepare supper, and not bring him like this unexpectedly."

"What guest, you good-for-nothing?" he said to her angrily.

"Now why are you so angry, husband? It's embarrassing in front of the guest."

"What guest are you talking about? Where do you see a guest? By God you're dreaming all this up, as I see!" her husband said to her.

"Ah husband, husband, you're right, I'm dreaming it all up! It's those damned beans we ate last night, that's why I'm seeing double!" she said.

When her husband heard these words, he changed his mind and said to her:

"Oh wife, oh dear! I almost had your blood on my head; I was going to kill you!"

"But why, husband? What have I done to you? Tell me, my dear!"

"Now I'll tell you and I'll confess my sin. Oh, but what good will it do? Here is the thing, dear wife. This morning when I came back to get my wallet, I saw two of you in bed, I got very angry and wanted to kill you, but the Lord saved me. Thank God an old woman also ate beans and saw double. And now you're seeing double, too. That's why now I believe that I must have been seeing double this morning. All because of those damned beans we ate last night!"

"Oh, husband! What a great sin you would have committed. You would have had my blood on your head. As they say: if you have a powerful angel, God will preserve you. You can make truth thin, but you can't break it. Isn't that right, husband? Tell me now, may you live with me and be healthy for 100 years: didn't you marry a faithful wife?"

"It's true, wife, may you be well and live a long life, and forgive me for sinning against you!"

"Husband, you're forgiven and God bless you, from me and from the wonderful Mother of God, from now to eternity!"

So, this is how the clever woman deceived her husband and again did as she pleased.