

# **The Book Of Dede Korkut**

Author Unknown

## Table of Contents

<b><u>The Book Of Dede Korkut</u></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<u>Author Unknown</u> .....	1
<u>The Story of Bugach Khan, Son of Dirse Khan</u> .....	1
<u>The Story of Deli Dumrul, Son of Duha Koja</u> .....	9
<u>The Story of Emren, Son of Begil</u> .....	14
<u>The Story of the Revolt of the Outer Oghuz against the Inner Oghuz and of the Death of Beyrek</u> .....	20
<u>The Story of Seghrek, Son of Ushun Koja</u> .....	25
<u>The Sack of the House of Salur Kazan</u> .....	31
<u>The Story of Yigenek, Son of Kazilik Koja</u> .....	41

# The Book Of Dede Korkut

Author Unknown

This page copyright © 2001 Blackmask Online.

<http://www.blackmask.com>

- [The Story of Bugach Khan, Son of Dirse Khan](#)
  - [The Story of Deli Dumrul, Son of Duha Koja](#)
  - [The Story of Emren, Son of Begil](#)
  - [The Story of the Revolt of the Outer Oghuz against the Inner Oghuz and of the Death of Beyrek](#)
  - [The Story of Seghrek, Son of Ushun Koja](#)
  - [The Sack of the House of Salur Kazan](#)
  - [The Story of Yigenek, Son of Kazilik Koja](#)
- 

## The Story of Bugach Khan, Son of Dirse Khan

One day Bayindir Khan, son of Kam Gan, arose and ordered that his large Damascus tent be erected. His brown parasol rose high up in the sky. Thousands of silk carpets were spread all around. It was customary for Bayindir Khan, Khan of Khans, to invite all the Oghuz princes to a feast once a year. As usual he gave a feast this year, too, and had many stallions, young male camels, and rams slaughtered for the occasion. He had three tents set up at three different places: one was white, one was red, and the third was black. He ordered that whoever was without children be accommodated in the black tent, with a black felt rug spread under him, and that be served the stew of the black sheep. He said, "Let him eat if he wants to eat; if he does not, let him go." He then said: "Put the man with a son in the white tent, and the man with a daughter in the red tent. The man without any children is cursed by Allah, and we curse him, too. Let this clear to all."

The Oghuz princes began to gather one by one. It happened that a prince among them by the name of Dirse Khan had neither a son nor a daughter. He spoke to his men as follows. Let us see, my khan, what he said:

"When the cooling breeze of morning blows,  
And the bearded gray lark sings his song,  
And the long-bearded Persian chants the *ezan*  
When the Bedouin horses nicker on seeing their master;  
At the time of the twilight,  
When the beautiful-breasted mountains are touched by the sun—  
At such a time, the warriors and gallant princes prepare for action."

At the break of the dawn Dirse Khan, accompanied by forty warriors, set out for the feast of Bayindir Khan.

Bayindir Khan's warriors welcomed Dirse Khan and asked him to go into the black tent, the floor of which was covered with a black felt rug. They placed the stew of black sheep before him and said, "My khan, this is the order of Bayindir Khan."

Dirse Khan asked: "What fault has Bayindir Khan found in me? Is it because of my sword or my table? He has men of lower status accommodated in the white and red tents. What is my fault that I am being put in a black

tent?"

They said, "My khan, today Bayindir Khan's order is as follows :  
"Whoever is without a son or a daughter is cursed by Allah; we curse him, too."

Standing up, Dirse Khan said to his men: "Rise and let us be off, my young men. The fault is either in me or in my lady."

Dirse Khan returned home, called his lady, and said to her:

"Will you come here, my love, the crown of my home?  
Walking along so tall, like a cypress tree,  
With long back hair that falls to her feet,  
With brows like a tightened bow;  
With a mouth too small for two almonds;  
Her red cheeks like the apples of autumn.  
My melon, my lady, my love!  
Do you know what happened to me?"

Bayindir Khan had three tents to put up: one white, one red, and one black. He had guests with sons put in the white tent; those with daughters in the red tent; and those with neither in the black tent with black felt carpet spread on its floor. He ordered that the stewed meat of the black sheep be served them, saying, 'If they eat, let them eat; if they do not, let them go away. Since Almighty Allah cursed them, we curse them too.' When I reached there they met me and led me to the black tent, laid back felt carpet under me, and served me the stewed meat of the black sheep, saying, 'The man without a son or a daughter is cursed by Allah; therefore, he is cursed by us, too. Let this be so known to you.' My wife, which of us is sterile, you or I? Why does Almighty Allah not give us a healthy son?"

Dirse Khan then continued in song.

"O child of a khan, shall I now get up  
And grasp you by the throat,  
And crush you beneath my hard boots?  
Shall I draw my sword of black steel  
And remove your head from your body,  
And show you how sweet life can be?  
Shall I spill your red blood on the ground?  
O child of a khan, tell the reason to me,  
Or I shall inflict something dreadful on you."

The wife of Dirse Khan replied:

"Oh, Dirse Khan, be not cruel to me.  
Be not angry and speak so harshly to me.  
But come now and have your red tent set up.  
Have some stallions, some rams, and some male camels slaughtered.  
Invite then the princes of Inner and Outer Oghuz.  
Feed all the hungry, give clothes to the naked, and pay off the debts of the poor.  
Heap up meat like a hill;  
Make a lakeful of koumiss; and give a magnificent feast.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Then speak your wish. Maybe Allah will give us a healthy son,  
An answer to prayers of a worthy man."

Following his lady's advice, Dirse Khan gave a large feast and then made his wish. He had stallions, young male camels, and rams slaughtered. He invited all the princes of the Inner and the Outer Oghuz to this feast. He fed the hungry, dressed the naked, and paid off the debts of the debtor; he had meat heaped up like a hill, and a lakeful of kousmiss made. The princes raised their hands to the heavens and prayed. Consequently, the wish of Dirse Khan was fulfilled, and his lady became pregnant. In due time she bore a male child. She had her child brought up in the care of nurses. As the horse is quick foot, so the minstrel is quick of tongue. As vertebrated and ribbed creatures grow fast, in the same way the son of Dirse Khan was soon fifteen years old.

One day Dirse Khan and his son went to the camp of Bayindir Khan. Bayindir Khan had a bull and a young male camel. The bull could powder harsh stones like flour with the impact of his horns. The bull and the camel were set to fight one another twice a year, once in summer and once in autumn. Bayindir Khan and the strong Oghuz princes used to enjoy themselves watching these fights.

This bull was let out of the palace one summer day. Three men on each side were holding it with iron chains. The bull was released in the middle of a playing field, where the son of Dirse Khan was playing at knuckle bones with three other boys from the camp. When the bull was released, the boys were told to run away. The other three boys ran away, but the son of Dirse Khan stood where he was. The bull ran toward the boy with the intent to kill him. The boy dealt the bull a terrific blow on the forehead. Then he pushed the bull to the edge of the playing field, with his fist pressing on its forehead. There they struggled to and fro. The bull stood pressing its forelegs against the ground, while the boy kept his fist on its forehead. It was impossible to say which was the winner. The boy thought to himself: "The pole holds the tent straight. Why am I supporting this bull?" Saying so, he pulled away his fist and ran to one side, while the bull, unable to stand on its feet, crashed on the ground head downward. Then the boy cut the throat of the bull with his knife.

The Oghuz princes gathered around the boy and said: "Well done, boy! Let Dede Korkut come and name him, then take him to his father and request a principality and a throne for him."

When they called for Dede Korkut, he came. He took the young man to his father and said to him:

"O Dirse Khan!  
Give this young man a principality now.  
Give him a throne for the sake of his virtue.  
Give him also a tall Bedouin horse  
He can ride—such a capable man.  
Give him ten thousand sheep  
To make shish kebab for himself; he has virtue.  
Give him next a red camel from out of your herd.  
Let it carry his goods; he has virtue.  
Give a large lavish tent with a golden pole  
To provide him with shade.  
Give a suit to this man and a coat that has birds on its shoulders.  
Let him wear both of these; he has skill.

This young man fought and killed a bull on the playing field of Bayindir Khan," continued Dede Korkut. "Therefore, let your son's name be *Bugach*. I give him his name, and may Allah give him his years of life.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Upon this, Dirse Khan gave his son a principality and a throne. After the son had sat upon his throne for a while, he began to despise the forty young warriors of his father. As a result of this, they bore him a grudge and plotted among themselves: "Let us turn his father against him, so that he may put the son to death, and thus our esteem with the khan may continue and grow."

Twenty of these warriors went to Dirse Khan and said to him: "Do you know what has happened Dirse Khan? Your son(may he never prosper) has become a very bad-tempered man. Taking his forty warriors, he attacked the mighty Oghuz people. When he saw a pretty girl, he kidnaped her. He insulted old men with white beards and squeezed the breasts of white-haired old women. The news of these evil deeds of your son will reach the ears of Bayindir Khan-through the clear waters of streams and over Ala Mountain lying back there -and people will be saying, 'How could the son of Dirse Khan do such terrible things?'" The warriors then continued: "You would rather die than live. Bayindir Khan will call you his presence and will give you a serious punishment. Such a son is not worthy of you. It is better not to have such a son,. Why do you not put him to death?"

"Bring him over here. I shall kill him," said Dirse Khan.

While he was speaking in this manner, the other twenty treacherous young men came and gave Dirse Khan the following unfounded information. "Your son went hunting in the beautiful mountains where he killed wild animals and birds without your permission. He brought the game to his mother. He drank strong red wine and had a good time in her company and there made up his mind to kill his father. Your son has become an evil person. The news of these deeds will reach Bayindir Khan, Khan of Khans, over Ala Mountain and people will begin to say, 'How could Dirse Khan's son do such terrible things?' They will call you before Bayindir Khan and punish you there. Such a son is not worthy of you. Why do you not kill him?"

"Bring him over here. I shall kill him. I do not want a son like him," said Dirse Khan.

His warriors said: "How can we bring your son here? He will not listen to us. Get up; take your warriors with you, call on your son, and ask him to go hunting with you. Then kill him with an arrow during the hunt. If you cannot kill him in this way, you will never be able to kill him."

When the cooling breeze of morning blows,  
And the bearded gray lark sings his song,  
When Bedouin horses nicker on seeing their master,  
And the long-bearded Persian chants the *ezan*,  
At the time of the twilight, when girls  
And brides of the mighty Oghuz wear their gorgeous gowns,  
When the beautiful-breasted mountains are touched by the sun-  
At such a time, the warriors and gallant princes prepare for action.

At the break of dawn, Dirse Khan arose and set out for the hunt, taking his son and forty warriors with him. They hunted wild animals and birds for a while. Then some of the treacherous warriors approached Dirse Khan's son and said to him: "Your father said, 'I want my son to chase the deer and kill them in front of me; I also want to see how he rides, and how he uses his sword and shoots his arrow. This will make me happy and proud and will give me confidence.'"

Not knowing his father's real intention, Bugach chased the deer and drove them toward his father and killed them before him. While doing this, Bugach said to himself, "Let my father see me ride and be proud; let him see me shoot my arrow and have confidence; let him see how I use my sword and rejoice."

The forty treacherous warriors then said to Dirse Khan; "Dirse Khan, do you see how he is driving the deer toward you? He means to shoot his arrow at you and kill you. Kill him before he kills you."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

After the young man had driven the deer past his father several times, Dirse Khan took out his strong bow strung with the tendon of a wolf. Standing in his stirrups, he pulled his bowstring hard and let his arrow go. He shot his son between the shoulder blades. When the arrow pierced his chest, red blood poured out, filling his shirt. He clasped his horse's neck and slipped to the earth. Dirse Khan wanted to fall upon the body of his son, but his men did not allow him to do so. He then turned the head of his horse in the opposite direction and rode to his camp.

Dirse Khan's lady had decided to celebrate her son's first hunt by giving a feast to the mighty Oghuz princes, and for this purpose she had stallions, young male camels, and rams killed. She now arose and taking with her the forty narrow-waisted girls of her household went to welcome Dirse Khan. Lifting her head, she looked first at Dirse Kahn, then gazed around, but nowhere could she see her dear son. She was shocked, and her heart began to beat fast. Her black eyes were filled with blood and tears. Let us hear what she said to her husband.

"Come to me here,  
The crown of my head, the throne of my house,  
My khan father's son-in-law,  
My lady mother's favorite,  
You, who were given me by my parents,  
You, whom I saw when I opened my eyes,  
The one whom I loved at first sight.  
O Dirse Khan, you arose from your place;  
You mounted the back of your stallion strong,  
And hunted the mountains with beautiful breasts.  
You rode off as two, but return now alone.  
Where is my son whom I found in the dark of the night?  
My searching eye—may it be confounded—twitches badly, Dirse Khan.  
My child—nursing breast—may it go quite dry—is sore.  
My white skin is swollen, though bitten by no yellow snake.  
My one son is lost! My poor heart is burning!  
Water I poured into beds of dry rivers.  
Alms I have given to black-suited dervishes.  
The hungry I saw I have fed.  
I had meat heaped up like a hill;  
I had lakefuls of koumiss fermented,  
And I managed, with great travail, to bear a son.  
Tell me, Dirse Khan, what befell my only son!  
Say if you let our son fall down Ala Mountain out there.  
Say if you let our son be carried down the fast-flowing river.  
Say if you let our son be eaten by lions and tigers.  
Say if you let black-dressed infidels, they of a savage faith,  
Capture our son.  
Let me go to my father, the khan, and take money and soldiers,  
To strike at the infidels, they with the savage religion.  
Let me never return from the search for my son  
Before I am wounded, fall of my strong horse,  
Wiping away my red blood with my sleeve,  
And sprawl on the road with broken limbs.  
Tell me, O Dirse Khan, what befell my only son.  
Let my luckless head be a sacrifice for you this day."

So speaking, she wept and gave voice to her sorrow. But Dirse Khan did not answer her.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Meanwhile, those forty treacherous men came along. They said to her: "Your son safe and well. He has been hunting. He will be back today or tomorrow. Do not worry about him. He cannot speak now, because he is a bit drunk."

Dirse Khan's lady turned back, but she could not rest. With her forty slim girls, she mounted and rode in search of her son. She climbed Kazilik Mountain from which snow and ice never melt all the year around. She drove her horse up steel hills. When she looked down, she saw that crows were descending on a river and flying in and out of it. She spurred her horse and rode in that direction.

This was the place where the young man had collapsed. When the crows had seen blood, they wanted to come down upon him, but his two dogs kept the crows from his body. When the young man had fallen there, the gray-horsed Hizir had appeared to him, and stroking his wounds three times, had said: "Do not be afraid of these wounds. You will not die of them. Mountain flowers mixed with your mother's milk will be balm to them." Having said this, he disappeared.

Then the young man's mother came upon him. Seeing her son lying there covered with blood, she addressed him with the following song. Let us see, my khan, what she said.

Your slit back eyes now taken by sleep—let them open.  
Your strong healthy bones have been broken,  
Your soul all but flown from your frame.  
If your body retains any life, let me know.  
Let my poor luckless head be a sacrifice to you.  
Kazilik Mountain, your waters still flow;  
Let them, I pray, cease their growing.  
Kazilik Mountain, your deer still run fast;  
Let them cease running and turn into stone.  
How can I know, my son, if it was lion  
Or tiger? How can I know, my son?  
How did this accident happen to you?  
If your life is still in your body, my son, let me know.  
Let my poor luckless head be a sacrifice to you.  
Speak a few words to me now."

As she said these things, her words entered his mind. He lifted his head, opened his eyes, and looked at his mother's face. He spoke to her. Let us see, my khan, what he said.

"Come closer, my mother,  
Whose milk I once drank,  
White-haired, beloved, and honorable mother.  
Curse not the running streams;  
Kazilik Mountain has done no wrong.  
Curse not its growing grass;  
Kazilik Mountain has no sins.  
Curse not its swift-running deer;  
Kazilik Mountain has no fault.  
Curse not the lions and tigers;  
Kazilik Mountain has no guilt.  
The evil and guilt all belong to my father."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

The young man then went on, "Do not cry, Mother. Do not worry. This wound will not kill me. The gray-horsed Hizir came to me and stroked my wound three times, saying, 'You will not die of this wound. Mountain flowers mixed with your mother's milk will be your balm.'"

When he said this, the forty slim girls went to gather mountain flowers. The young man's mother squeezed her breasts once, but no milk came out. She squeezed once more, but still no milk came out. The third time she struck herself and squeezed her breasts even harder, and finally some milk stained with blood appeared. Mixing the milk with the mountain flowers, they applied this balm to the young man's wound. Then they put him on a horse and took him to his camp. There he was delivered into the care of a physician and concealed from the sight of Dirse Khan.

As the horse is quick of foot, so the poet is quick of tongue. My khan, the young man's wounds were healed in forty days and he recovered completely. He was once again able to ride and wear his sword, to hunt and shoot birds. Dirse Khan knew nothing of all this. He thought that his son was dead.

But his forty treacherous men soon heard of this and discussed among themselves what they should do. They said: "If Dirse Khan sees his son, he will kill us all. Let us catch Dirse Khan, tie his white hands at his back, put a rope around his white neck, and take him to the land of the infidels." They did as they had decided. They tied his white hands behind him, and they put a rope around his white neck. Then they beat him until blood oozed from his white flesh. Dirse Khan was made to walk while they accompanied him on horseback. They led him to the land of the bloody infidels. While Dirse Khan was thus a captive, the Oghuz beys knew nothing of his plight.

Dirse Khan's lady, however, learned of this. She went to her son and spoke to him. Let us see, my khan, what she said.

"Do you know what has happened, my son? Not only the steep rocks but the very earth should have shaken, for although there were no enemies in our lands, your father was attacked. Those forty treacherous companions of his captured him, tied his white hands behind him, put a rope around his neck, and forced him to walk while they rode on horseback. They took him toward infidel territory. Come, now, my son. Take your forty warriors with you and save our father from those forty faithless men. Go now and spare your father, even if he did not spare you."

The young man followed his mother's advice. He arose, strapped on his big steel sword, took his tight bow in one hand, and held his golden spear under his other arm. Then, as his strong horse was held, he mounted and, accompanied by his forty young men, went in pursuit of his father.

The treacherous retainers of Dirse Khan had stopped along the way and were drinking red wine. As Bugach Khan rode along, the forty treacherous men saw him approaching. They said "Let us go and capture that young man and take both him and Dirse Khan to the infidels."

Dirse Khan said: "Oh, my forty companions, there is no doubt about the oneness of Allah. Untie my hands, give me a lute, and I shall persuade that young man to go back. Let me loose or kill me." They untied his hands and gave him his lute.

Dirse Khan did not know that the young man was his own son. He went to him and sang.

"If tall stallions have gone, let me count them my loss.  
Tell me if any of yours were among them, young man,  
So that I may restore them without any fight. Turn back!  
If a full thousand sheep have gone from the fold, let me count them my loss.  
Tell me if any of yours were among them,  
So that I may restore them without any fight. Turn back!"

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

If red camels have gone from the herd, let me count them my loss.  
Tell me if any of yours were among them,  
So that I may restore them without any fight. Turn back!  
If brides with brown eyes and white faces have gone, let me count them my loss.  
And if your betrothed was among them, tell me,  
So that I may restore them without any fight. Turn back!  
If white-bearded elders have gone, let me count them my loss.  
If your white-bearded father was with them, tell me,  
So that I may restore them without any fight. Turn back!  
If you came after me, I have killed my own son.  
Young man, it is not any sin that is yours. Turn back!"

The young man replied to the song of his father. Let us see, my khan, what he said.

"Tall stallions may count as your loss,  
But one of the lost is mine;  
I shall not give him up to the forty base men.  
From the herds the red camels are mine;  
I shall not give him up to the forty base men.  
Thousands of sheep may be counted your loss,  
But among them are some that are mine;  
I shall not give him up to the forty base men.  
The birds with brown eyes and white faces may count as your loss,  
But among them is my betrothed;  
I shall not give him up to the forty base men.  
If the golden-topped tents may be counted as your loss,  
Mine too is among them;  
I shall not give him up to the forty base men.  
If white-bearded elders are counted your loss,  
My foolish old father is also among them;  
I shall not give him up to the forty base men.  
"

He waved a handkerchief to his own forty young men, and they came and gathered around him. With their aid, he fought with the enemy. Some of these he killed and some he captured. When he had saved his father in this manner, he returned home.

Dirse Khan thus discovered that his son was alive. Bayindri Khan, Khan of Khans, gave the young man a principality and a throne. Dede Korkut sang songs on the occasion and composed this legend of the Oghuz. Following this, he sang:

"Even they passed away from this world.  
They stayed for a while and then moved along,  
Just as the caravan does.  
Even they were removed by death  
While this mortal world remained behind,  
The world where men come and go,  
The world which is rounded off by death."

Then he said: "When black Death comes, may Allah keep you safe. May He let you rule in good health. May Almighty Allah whom I praise be your friend and keeper.";

This I pray, my khan. May your tall, stately mountains never fall. May your big shade tree never be cut down, and may your clear running waters never run dry. May your wings never be big steel sword never be notched and may your spear never be broken in battle. May your white-haired mother's and white-bearded father's place be paradise. May Allah keep your household fire burning. May our merciful Allah never abandon you to the guile of the treacherous.

## The Story of Deli Dumrul, Son of Duha Koja

My Khan, among the Oghuz people there was a man by the name of Deli Dumrul, the son of Duha Koja. He had a bridge built across a dry river bed. He collected thirty-three *akchas* from anyone who passed over it he beat and charged forty *akchas* anyway. He did this to challenge anyone who thought he was braver than Deli Dumrul to fight, with the purpose of making his own bravery, heroism, and gallantry known even in places as far distant as Anatolia and Syria.

One day it happened that a troop of nomads camped along his bridge. A fine, handsome youth in the nomad troop fell sick and died at the command of Allah. Some cried, saying, "Son," some cried, saying, "Brother," and there was great mourning for him.

Deli Dumrul, wanting to come along, asked: "Why are you crying, cuckolds? What is this noise by my bridge? Why are you mourning?"

The said: "My khan, we lost a fine young man. That is why we are crying."

Deli Dumrul asked, "Who killed your bey?"

They said: "Oh, bey, it was by the order of Almighty Allah. The red-winged Azrail took his life."

"What sort of fellow is this azrail who takes people's lives? For the sake of your unity and existence, O Almighty Allah, let me see Azrail. Let me fight and scuffle with him to save the life of such a fine youth, so that he never takes a life again," said Deli Dumrul. He then turned away and went home.

Now, Almighty Allah was not pleased with Dumrul's words. He said: "Look at that madman. He does not understand my oneness. He does not express his gratitude to me and dares to behave arrogantly in my mighty presence." He ordered Azrail: "Go and appear before the eyes of that madman. Make his face pale and strangle the life out of him."

When Deli Dumrul was sitting and drinking with his forty companions, Azrail suddenly arrived. Neither the chamberlains nor the wardens had seen Azrail pass. Deli Dumrul's eyes were blinded, his hands paralyzed. The entire world was darkened to his eyes. He began to speak. Let us see what he said, my khan.

"What a mighty, big old man you are!  
The wardens did not see you come;  
The chamberlains did not hear.  
My eyes, which could see, now cannot;  
My hands, which which could grip, now cannot.  
My soul trembled and was terrified;  
My golden cup fell from my hand.  
My mouth is cold as ice;  
My bones are turned to dust.  
Ho!white-bearded old man,  
Cold-eyed old man!

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

What mighty old man are you?  
Go away, or I may hurt you."  
Azrail was angry at these remarks. He said:  
"Oh, madman,  
do you dislike the cold expression in my eyes?  
I have taken the lives of many lovely eyed girls and brides.  
Why is it you dislike my white beard?  
I have taken the lives of both white-bearded and black-bearded men.  
That is why my own beard is white."

He continued in this way: "Oh, madman! You were boasting and saying that you would kill the red-winged Azrail if you caught him, to save the life of the fine young lad. Oh, fool, now I have come to take your life. Will you give it, or will you fight with me?"

Deli Dumrul asked: "Are you the red-winged Azrail?"

"Yes, I am," replied Azrail.

"Are you the one who takes the lives of these fine boys?" asked Dumrul.

"That is so," said Azrail.

Deli Dumrul said, "Ho, wardens, shut the doors." He then turned to Azrail and said: "O Azrail, I was expecting to catch you in a wide open place, but I caught you in a narrow one, did I not? Let me kill you and save the life of that fine young man." He drew his big black sword, held it in his hand, and tried to strike Azrail with it, but Azrail became a pigeon and flew out of the window. Deli Dumrul, a monster of a man, clapped his hands and burst out in laughter. He said: "My friends, I frightened Azrail so much that he ran out, not through the wide open door, but through the chimney. To save himself from my hand, he just became a pigeon and flew away. I shall have him caught by my falcon."

He mounted his horse, took his falcon on his wrist, and started pursuing Azrail. He killed a few pigeons. On the way home, however, Azrail appeared to the eyes of his horse. The horse was frightened and threw Deli Dumrul off its back to the ground. His poor head grew dizzy, and he became powerless. Azrail came and pressed down upon his white chest. He had been murmuring a short while ago, but now he gasped out through the rattle in his throat:

"O Azrail, have mercy!  
There is no doubt about the unity of Allah.  
I was uninformed about you.  
I did not know you secretly took lives.  
We have mountains with large peaks;  
We have vineyards on those mountains;  
In those vineyards there are vines with bunches of black grapes;  
And, when pressed, those grapes make wine, red wine.  
A man who drinks that wine grows drunk.  
Thus I was drunk, and so I did not hear.  
I did not know what I had said.  
I have not tired of the role of bey.  
I wish to live out more years of my youth.  
O Azrail, please spare this life of mine."

Azrail said: "You mad rascal, why do you beg mercy from me? Beg mercy from Almighty Allah. What is in my hands? I am but a servant."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Deli Dumrul said, "Is it, then, Almighty Allah, who gives and takes our lives?"

"Of course," said Azrail.

Deli Dumrul then turned to Azrail and said: "You are a cursed fellow. Do not interfere with my business. Let me talk with Almighty Allah myself." Deli Dumrul spoke to Allah. Let us listen, my khan, to what he said:

"You are higher than the highest.  
No one knows how high you are,  
Allah the Manificent.  
Fools search for you up in the sky and on earth;  
You are found in the hearts of the faithful,  
Eternal and Almighty Allah.  
Immortal, merciful Allah,  
If you wish to take my life away,  
Then take it by yourself.  
Let not Azrail do it.

Almighty Allah was pleased with the way Deli Dumrul addressed him this time. He shouted to Azrail that, because the mad rascal believed in His oneness, he was giving him his blessing and that his life might be spared if he could find another willing to serve as a substitute for him.

Azrail said to Deli Dumrul, "Oh, Deli Dumrul, it is the command of Almighty Allah that you should provide the life of someone else for your own, which will then be spared."

Deli Dumrul said: "How can I find someone else's life? I have no one in the world but an old mother and an old father. Let us go and see if one of them will give his life for me. If so, you can take it, and leave me mine." Deli Dumrul rode to his father's house, kissed his father's hand, and spoke to him. Let us see, my khan, what he said to his father.

"My white-bearded father, beloved and respected,  
Do you know what has happened to me?  
I spoke in blasphemy,  
And my words made Allah the Almighty angry.  
He commanded the red-winged Azrail above  
To fly from the sky.  
He pressed on my white chest, sitting on me.  
He made my throat rattle, almost took my sweet life.  
Father, I beg you to give me your life.  
Will you give me it, Father?  
Or would you prefer to weep after me, saying.  
'My son, Deli Dumrul!'"  
His father answered:  
"Son, Son, oh, my son!  
a part of my life, oh, Son.  
Lionlike son, for whom I once had slaughtered nine camels,  
Backbone of my house with its chimneys of gold,  
A flower to my gooselike daughters and birds.  
If need be, command the black mountain out yonder  
To come here and serve Azrail's pasture.  
If need be, then let my cool springs be his fountain.  
If need be, then give him my stables of beautiful horses to ride.  
If need be, my caravan camel can carry his goods.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

If need be, the white sheep that stand in my fold  
Can be cooked in the kitchen for food at his feast.  
If need be, my silver and gold money will be for him.  
But the world is too sweet, and living too dear  
To spare my own life. So know this  
There remains yet your mother, more dear and beloved than I.  
Son, go to your mother."  
Refused by his father, Deli Dumrul next rode to his mother and said to her:  
"Do you know what has happened to me?  
The red-winged Azrail flew down from the sky  
And pressed my white chest as he sat upon me.  
He made my throat rattle, almost took away life.  
My father denied me the life that I asked from him, Mother.  
I ask you for yours, now, my mother.  
Will you give me your life?  
Or would you prefer to weep after me, saying,  
'My son, Deli Dumrul!'  
While scratching your white face with sharp fingernails  
And tearing your black spearlike hair?"  
Let us hear, my khan, what his mother said.  
"Son, Son, oh, my son!  
Son, whom I carried nine months in my narrow womb,  
Whom I bore in the tenth month  
And swaddled in the cradle with care,  
Whom I fed my abundant white milk.  
Son, I wish you had rather been held in a white-towered castle,  
Been held there by infidel men with religion so foul,  
So that then I might have saved you, using the power of wealth.  
But instead, you are sunk to a frightful position  
Where I cannot reach you.  
The world is too sweet, and the human soul too dear  
To spare my own life. So know this."

His mother also refused to give her life for him. Azrail therefore came to take Deli Dumrul's life. Deli Dumrul said:

"O Azrail, be not hasty.  
There is no doubt about the oneness of Allah."

Azrail replied: "Oh, you madman, why do you keep begging for mercy? You went to your white-bearded father, but he refused to give his life. You then went to your white-haired mother, and she also refused to give you her life. Who do you think will give you his life?"

"I have a lawful wife, the daughter of a man from another tribe, and I have two children by her. Take my life after I visit them. I have a few things to say to them." He rode then to his wife and said to her,

"Do you know what has happened to me?  
The red-winged Azrail flew down from the sky  
And pressed my white chest as he sat upon me.  
He almost took away my sweet life.  
My father denied me the life that I asked from him.  
I went to my mother, but she refused to, too."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

They said that the world was too sweet and life was too dear.  
Let my high black mountains now be your pasture.  
Let my cooling springs be your fountain.  
Let my stables of beautiful horses be yours now to ride.  
Let my beautiful gold–chimneyed house give you shelter.  
Let my caravan camels carry your goods.  
Let white sheep in my fold be served at your feast.  
Go, marry another,  
Whomever your heart loves.  
Let not two sons remain orphans."

His wife then spoke. Let us hear, my khan, what she said.

"What is it you say,  
My strong ram, my young shah.  
Whom I loved at first sight,  
And gave all of my heart?  
Whom I gave my sweet lips to be kissed;  
Whom I slept with upon the sam epillow, and loved.  
What shall I do with the black mountains yonder  
When you are no longer here?  
Should I take my flock there, let my grave be there, too?  
Should I sip your cool springs, let my blood run like water.  
Should I spend your gold coins, let them be for my shroud.  
Should I ride on your stables of beautiful horses, let them be my hearse.  
Should I love, after you, any other young man  
And marry him, lie with him;  
Let him turn serpent and then let him bite me.  
What is there in life  
That your miserable parents  
Could spare not their own lives for yours?  
Let the heavens, the eight–storied heavens, be witness;  
Let the earth and the sky be my witness, as well;  
Let Almighty Allah witness for me:  
Let my life be a sacrifice made for the sake of your own."

Saying this, she consented to die, and Azrail came to take the lady's life.

But that monster of a man, Deli Dumrul, could not spare his companion. He pleaded with Almighty Allah. Let us hear how he pleaded.

"Thou art higher than the highest;  
No one knows how high you are,  
Allah the Magnificent!  
Fools search for you in the sky and on earth,  
But you live in the heart of the faithful.  
Eternal and merciful Allah,  
Let me build needed homes for the poor  
Along the main roads of the land.  
Let me feed hungry men for your sake when I see them.  
If you take any life, take the lives of us both.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

If you spare any life, spare the lives of us both,  
Merciful Almighty Allah."

Almighty Allah was pleased with Deli Dumrul's words. He gave his orders to Azrail: "Take the lives of Deli Dumrul's father and mother. I have granted a life of 140 years to this lawfully married couple." Azrail proceeded to take the lives of the father and mother right away, but Deli Dumrul lived with his wife for 140 years more.

Dede Korkut came and told tales and sang legends. He said: "Let this legend be Deli Dumrul's. Let heroic minstrels after me sing it, and let generous men with clean foreheads listen to it."

Let me pray, my khan: "May your rugged black mountains never fall down. May your large shade tree never be felled. May your clear running streams never dry up. May Almighty Allah never let you be at the mercy of the base. We have spoken five words of prayer in behalf of your white forehead. May they be accepted. May He clear away your sins and forgive them for the sake of Mohammed with the exalted name.

### The Story of Emren, Son of Begil

Bayindir Khan, the son of Kam Gan, arose from his place and had his large white tent erected on the surface of the black earth. His brown canopy colored the sky, and his silk carpets were spread out in a thousand places. The beys of the Inner and Outer Oghuz were all invited to his presence.

The tribute of the nine divisions of Georgia was brought forward. It consisted only of a horse, a sword, and a club, and Bayindir Khan was very much dissatisfied with it. Dede Korkut came, played the *kopuz*, and then asked, "My khan, why are you upset?"

Bayindir Khan replied: "Why should I not be upset? Every year in the past they sent gold and silver money, which we distributed among the beys and young men to make them happy. Now, to whom I can I give these things? Whom would I make happy with them?"

Dede Korkut suggested, "My khan, let us give these three things to a young man, and let him serve as the watchman of the Oghuz."

Bayindir Khan asked, "To whom shall we give them?" He looked to his left and his right, but no one would accept them. There was a man there by the name of Begil. Bayindir Khan looked at him and said, "What do you say?"

Begil accepted the gifts by standing up and then kissing the earth. Dede Korkut politely girded him with the sword, placed the club on his shoulder, and attached his bow to his wrist. Begil had his strong horse brought to him so that he could mount it. He packed up his tent, gathered his relatives, broke camp, and left the Oghuz. Going to Berde and Genje, he settled there to patrol the border of an area where nine divisions of Georgians were stationed. Whenever a stranger or an infidel came along, he cut off his head and sent it to the Oghuz as a gift.

He attended Bayindir Khan's annual council, but one day a messenger came from Bayindir Khan asking him to report to the court right away. Begil went to Bayindir Khan's court, presented him his gifts, and kissed his hand. The Khan entertained him as his guest, rewarding him with a good horse, fine clothes, and much gold. Begil was the Khan's house guest for three days. One day Khan said: "Beys, let us entertain him now as our hunting guest and feed him with game for three more days." A hunting party was announced.

While preparations were being made for the hunt, some of the beys praised their horses, while others boasted about the way they drew their swords and shot their arrows. Salur Kazan praised neither his horse nor himself, but he talked about Begil's skill as a hunter. If there was a hunting party of three hundred and sixty-six horsemen and

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

they went after a deer, Begil would neither pull his bowstring nor shoot his arrow. He used to remove his bow from over his wrist and just throw it around the neck of the male deer or wild cattle, and stop the animal by pulling it. If the animal was lean, he used to make a hole through its ear as a sign and let it free. If the animal was fat, he used to cut his throat. Whenever the beys killed a deer with a hole in its ear, they knew that it was Begil's and they would send it to him.

Kazan Bey wondered aloud, "It is the skill in the horse or in the man?"

Those present said, "It is in the man, my khan."

The khan insisted: "No, if the horse does not do his work, the man cannot boast. The skill is in the horse."

Begil was not pleased with these remarks of the khan. He said, "You have pushed us into the mud with the crupper of our horse, and among all these heroes." He just dropped the gifts he had received from Bayindir in front of him, for he was offended, and then he left council. They brought him his horse, and he rode home with his brown-eyed companions. There, his sons came out to meet them, but he would not fondle them; he would not talk to his white-faced wife.

She addressed him at this point. Let us hear, my khan, what she said.

"My bey, the master of my golden throne,  
You whom I loved with all my heart  
When I opened my eyes. You arose and set out  
And, taking your brown-eyed companions,  
You crossed, by night, the Ala Mountain with the curving back;  
You crossed, by night, swift rivers and fair streams,  
To reach, by night, the council of the white-browed Bayindir, our khan.  
You ate and drank among the brown-eyed beys.  
Saw you not your relatives and tribesmen?  
Were you angered in some argument?  
And where is your fine horse?  
You lack your golden armor and your helmet.  
You failed to fondle your young brown-eyed sons.  
You spoke not to your white-faced love.  
Now tell me what it is that troubles you."

Begil replied to his wife. Let us see, my khan, what he said to her.

"I stood up from my place to go,  
Mounting my black-maned Kazilik horse.  
I crossed, by night, the Ala Mountain with the curving back;  
I crossed, by night, swift rivers and fair streams;  
I reached the council of the white-browed Bayindir;  
I ate and drank among the brown-eyed beys.  
I saw my tribesmen and my relatives.  
I saw, too, that our khan's eyes turned away from us.  
Let all the camp prepare to move,  
For we shall go to Georgian lands.  
Let it be known that I revolted from the Oghuz."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

His wife said: "My man, my bey, the kings are the shadows of Allah on earth. Whoever revolts against his king will have bad luck. If there is rust in a clean heart, wine will remove it. Since you went away, no one has hunted on your beautiful mountains stretching yonder. Go there and hunt. It will cheer your heart."

Begil found his wife's advice to be reasonable. Having his Kazilik horse brought out, he mounted it and went hunting. As he wandered about, hunting, a deer jumped out along the trail before him. He let his horse chase the deer, and, when they reached the animal, he just put his bowstring, around its neck. The animal jumped down a steep decline, however, and Begil, who could not stop his horse, flew after the deer and broke his right leg when it struck a rock. He raised himself and cried out, "I have neither a grown son or a brother to help me now." He took an arrowhead from his quiver, and, cutting the crupper of his horse, he tied it firmly around his leg beneath his clothes. Gathering what strength he had left, he leaped upon his horse, held tightly to its mane, and rode back all alone. As he approached his camp, his turban became tangled around his neck.

He was met by his son Emren Bahadir, who saw that his father's face was pale and that his turban had fallen around his neck. The boy questioned his father about his companions. Let us see, my khan, what he said.

" You stood up from your place to go,  
Mounting your black-maned Kazilik horse.  
You went to hunt at the foot of yonder mountains brown.  
Were you met by black-dressed infidels?  
Were all your dark-eyed warriors killed?  
Tell it all briefly, for my poor head is sacrifice for you."

Let us see how Begil answered his son, my khan.

"Son, Son, oh, Son!  
I stood up from my place and went  
To hunt at the foot of yonder mountains dark.  
I was not met by black-dressed infidels,  
Nor were my brow-eyed warriors killed.  
Fear not, my son. My comrades are all safe and strong.  
But I have not been well for three days, Son.  
Remove me from my horse and bear me to my bed."

The son of a lion is also a lion. He put his arms around his father, took him down from his horse, and carried him to his bed. He covered him with his cloaks and shut the door of his room.

When Begil's young companions had seen that the hunt had ended, each went to his home. For five days after that, Begil did not appear at the council, nor did he tell anyone that his leg was broken. One morning as he was moaning and sighing in his bed, his wife said to him: "My young bey, if you had been met by superior enemy forces, you would not have minded that. If an arrow were struck in your thigh, you would not moan. Will you not tell your secret to your legal wife who sleeps with you? What is the matter with you?"

Begil replied, "My love, I fell from my horse and my leg was broken."

She clapped her hands and told this news to the servant. She went outside and told it to the doorkeeper. What came out through the thirty-two teeth spread throughout the camp in no time: "Begil fell off his horse, and his leg was broken!"

It happened that there was an infidel spy in that place. He heard the news and reported it to his king, who said: "Bestir yourselves! Catch Begil Bey while he is lying in his bed. Bind his hands, cut off his beautiful head, and

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

spill his red blood upon the earth. Plunder his tribe and his camp, and capture both his daughters and his daughters-in-law."

It happened that Begil also had a spy in the area. He sent word to Begil, saying: "Prepare for battle! The enemy is coming."

Begil looked up and said, "The heavens are deep and far away, and the earth is hard." He called his son to his side and spoke to him. Let us hear, my khan, what he said.

"Son, Son, oh, Son!  
The light of my eyes in darkness, Son!  
Now see what befell me;  
See what recently happened to me.  
Son, I arose from my place  
And mounted the red stallion's back—may its neck be broken.  
While I hunted and wandered about,  
He was angry and threw me to earth,  
So I broke my right leg.  
It was this that befell my poor head.  
The news has now crossed the dark mountains,  
Has crossed rivers flowing with blood,  
Until it has reached Iron Gate Pass,  
Where Shokli Melik with his dappled horse  
In ambush waits, while the smoke from his camp  
Settles round the dark mountains.  
He has ordered that Begil Bey be caught in his bed  
And his white hands be tied,  
That his colorful camp should be plundered,  
His pale daughters and daughters-in-law should be captured.  
Son, arise from your place and depart.  
Go quickly and mount your black Kazilik horse.  
Pass, by night, over yon Ala Mountain  
To reach the council of white-browed Bayindir, our khan.  
Greet Bayindir there with the word of your mounth  
And then kiss the hand of Kazan, bey of beys.  
Tel how your white-bearded father is pressed,  
How he wishes Kazan Bey to come to his aid.  
Tell him lest he comes, the land will be ruined,  
My daughters and daughters-in-law will be captured."

The son replied to hs father. Let us see what he said, my khan.

"My father, what is it you say?  
Oh, why are you burning my heart?  
I refuse to arise from my place and depart,  
Or to mount my big Kazilik horse with black mane,  
Or to pass Ala Mountain with back that is curved,  
Or to go to the council of white-browed Bayindir.  
Who is Kazan, I ask? I shall not kiss his hand.  
Give to me the red stallion beneath you.  
Let me ride him until he sweats blood.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Give to me your steel armor all hard-backed;  
Let me put on the clothes made for you.  
Give to me your black sword made of steel;  
Let me cut human heads off for you.  
Give to me your white-tailed whistling arrow;  
Let me shoot it through enemy ranks.  
Give to me your three hundred bold warriors;  
Let me fight in the cause of Mohammed's religion for you."

Begil replied to this as follows: " I am extremely pleased with what you have said, Son. I only hope that you will fight just as hard as I would. Ho! Bring my armor and let my son wear it. Bring my stallion and let my son mount it. Let him enter the battlefield before my people are frightened."

After the young man was arrayed, he embraced his father and mother and kissed their hands. Taking his three hundred men, he reached the field of battle. Whenever the red stallion picked up the scent of the enemy, he would paw the earth with his hooves, sending a cloud of dust skyward.

The infidels said: "That horse is Begil's! Let us go!"

Their bey said: "Look well, and let me know if it is Begil coming. If it is, I shall run away before you do."

A watchman looked and saw that the horse was indeed Begil's, though Begil himself was not on it. There was instead a small birdlike boy on the horse. He went and reported this to the infidel bey, saying, "The horse, the weapons, and the helmet are Begil's, but Begil himself is not there."

The infidel bey said, "Select one hundred men to make a lot of noise and frighten the boy, for boys are bird-hearted. He will just leave the field and run away."

One hundred men were selected, and they rode against the boy, addressing him as follows:

"Boy, boy, oh, boy!  
Oh, bastard boy!  
Whose horse beneath him is so lean, oh, boy.  
Whose black steel sword is nicked, oh, boy.  
Whose spear is notched, oh, boy.  
Whose bow with white bowstring is short, oh boy.  
Whose quiver holds far fewer arrows than ninety, oh boy.  
Whose companions are ake, oh boy.  
Whose dar eyes are weakened, oh boy.  
Shokli Melik has made awful plans for you, boy.  
'Catch that boy on the field.  
Tie his hands round his wrists.  
Then cut off his beautiful unthinking head,  
And pour his red blood on the ground.'  
If you have a white-bearded father, preserve him from tears.  
If you have a ehite-haired mother, preserve her from pain.  
A brave hero cannot fight alone.  
The wormwood is held by weak roots.  
You cuckold, the son a cuckold, your time is at hand.  
Turn back and depart!"

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

But the boy replied to him as follows:

"Speak not such nonsense, oh, infidel dog!  
Do you fear the red stallion that gallops beneath me?  
As soon as he saw you, he started to prance.  
The steel armor I wear is tight on my shoulder.  
My sword of black steel cuts its sheath with impatience.  
Why do you not like my spear?  
It can cut through your breast, then fly into the sky.  
Loud is the twang of my bowstring strong.  
In their quiver my arrows lie restless.  
My men all demand that we fight.  
It is shameful to try to intimidate heroes.  
Step forward, oh, infidel. Now let us fight."

The infidel replied, "A spoiled Oghuz is like a mad Turkoman! Look at him."

The infidel bey said, "Go, and ask what relation he is to Begil." The infidel came and talked to the young man in the following manner. Let us see what he said to him.

"We know the red stallion beneath you is Begil's;  
But where now is Begil?  
Your sword of black steel—that is Begil's;  
But where is now Begil?  
The steel armor you wear—that is Begil's;  
But where is now Begil?  
The young men who ride with you are Begil's;  
But where is now Begil?  
If Begil himself were at hand,  
We should fight through the day in to night;  
We should pull our hard bowstrings,  
And shoot white-tailed arrows that whistle.  
Now tell us young man—what relation is Begil to you?"

The son of Begil spoke to them at this point. Let us see what he said. "Oh, you infidel, do you not know me? The white-browed Bayindir Khan's chief bey, Salur Kazan, his brother Kara Gone, Donebilmez Dulek Evren, Alp Rustem, the son of Duzen, and Beyrek with the Gray Horse were drinking in Begil's Bey's house when one of your spies came. Begil gave me his red stallion, his steel sword, his spear, and three hundred warriors. I am Begil's son, oh, infidel. Come and let us fight."

The infidel bey replied: "Beware, oh, son of a cuckold! I am coming!" He took his six-jointed club and rode toward the young man, who held his shield up against the club. The infidel dealt the young man a terrific blow from above, breaking his shield, denting his helmet, and scraping its visor, but he could not kill him. They fought with their clubs and swords all over the field. Their shoulders were bruised and their swords bent, but neither was able to defeat the other. They attacked one another with their spears, butted one another like bulls in the arena, and struck one another on the chests with their spears, both of which were broken. They grappled while riding their horses, pushing and pulling each other. The infidel finally overwhelmed the young man, who was exhausted.

Emren prayed to Almighty Allah as follows. Let us see what he said.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

" You are higher than the highest, Allah the Sublime;  
No one knows how high, O fairest Allah.  
Yo gave a crown to Adam.  
You placed a curse on Satan,  
Dismissed him from your presence.  
Abraham you saved,  
Wrapped in a skin,  
When he was cast into the flames,  
And made a garden amidst the flames.  
I come for refuge underneath your oneness.  
Dear venerable Allah, help me now."

The infidel said: " Young man, are you praying to your god because you are defeated? If you have one god, I have seventy-two houses for idols."

The young man said, "Ho, you cursed heretic; if you are begging help from your idols, I am taking refuge in my Allah, who created the universe out of nothing."

Almighty Allah gave an order to Gabriel: "O Gabriel, go to that young man. I have given him the strength of forty men." The young man approached the infidel and struck him down. Blood began to gush out of his nose. The young man sprang like a falcon and grasped the infidel by the throat.

He said: "Oh, young man, wait. What is your religion called? I have decided to join your religion." Lifting his finger and confirming the oneness of Allah, he became a Moslem. When the rest of the infidels was this, they fled from the field. Raiders then destroyed the infidel's camp and captured his daughters and brides.

The young man had the good news carried to his father by a messenger, saying, "I have defeated my enemy." His white-haired father came out to welcome him. He embraced his son, and they went home together.

HE gave his son a grazing ground on the dark mountains lying yonder. He gave him fast black horses to ride and a white sheep to be slaughtered for his banquet. He arranged for a bride with a red trousseau for his brown-eyed son. He sent one-fifth of all his spoils to white-browed Bayindir Khan. Taking his son with him then, he went to Bayindir Khan's council. He kissed his hand. The ruler showed a place to the right of Uruz, the son of Kazan. He had him dressed in a gown. Dede Korkut came and played the *kopuz* and recited this Oghuz legend, saying, "This Oghuznamah is for Emren, son of Begil." He then told legends about the deeds of Moslem heroes.

Let me pray, my khan: May your dark native mountains never fall down. May your big shady tree never be cut down, your Allah-given hope never be lost; and may Allah forgive your sins, for the sake of Mohammed-his name be praised-oh, my khan.

### **The Story of the Revolt of the Outer Oghuz against the Inner Oghuz and of the Death of Beyrek**

Kazan used to have his tents plundered at gatherings of the Inner Oghuz and the Outer Oghuz. It was one of these occasions when he was again having his tents plundered, but this time the Outer Oghuz were not present. When Kazan decided to have his tents plundered, he used to take his wife's hand and leave, and then the plunder would begin. When Uruz Koja, Emen, and the other Outer Oghuz beys heard about the plunder, they complained: "Until now we have always plundered Kazan's tents together. Why are we excluded this time?" The beys of the Outer Oghuz refused to go to Kazan, and they declared their hostility.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

There was a man by the name of Kilbash to whom Kazan said: "Kilbash, those Outer Oghuz beys have always come to my plunder. Why did they not come this time?"

Kilbash said: "Do you not know? It was because you did not want them to plunder your tents. That is the reason."

Kazan said: "Have they, then, decided to break off our friendly relations?"

Kilbash suggested, "My khan, let me go and find out whether they are friendly or hostile to you."

Kazan said: "As you wish. Go if you like."

Kilbash took several men and rode to the tent of Uruz Koja, Kazan's maternal uncle. Uruz Koja had his golden canopy put up and was sitting beneath it with his sons. Kilbash came, greeted Uruz Koja, and said: "Kazan is in an awkward position. He sent word saying, 'Tell my uncle Uruz to be sure to come and see me. I am in trouble, for the enemy is harassing me. He makes my camels cry and my Kazilik horses neigh. My gooselike daughters and brides are in distress. Come and see what the plight of my poor head is.' He wants you to come."

Uruz Koja said: "Kilbash, whenever the Inner Oghuz used to assemble with the Outer Oghuz, Kazan had his tents plundered. What is our fault that we were not invited this time? He forgets us when it comes to plunder, but remembers us when he needs help. Let it be known to him that from now on we are his enemies."

To this, Kilbash replied as follows:

"O villain!  
Khan Kazan arose from his place  
To order large tents to be pitched on Ala Mountain.  
All the beys thought of you as they ate and they drank.  
We have not been attacked by the enemy yet.  
I have come but to learn how you stand: friend or foe.  
I have learned that you stand as a foe to Kazan."

He stood up and left, saying, "Remain in peace!"

Greatly angered, Uruz Koja sent for the beys of the Outer Oghuz. He invited Emen, Alp Rustem, Donebilmez Dulek Evren, and all the other beys. All the beys of the Outer Oghuz were assembled, with their large tents set up on the grass. Uruz Koja had stallions, male camels, and rams slaughtered for the occasion. He gave a banquet for the beys of the Outer Oghuz and entertained them. He asked them, "Beys, do you know why I have invited you?"

They replied, "No, we do not know."

Uruz Koja said: "I told Kilbash that when Kazan used to have tents plundered, the beys of the Outer Oghuz took part in the plunder. They would come and salute Kazan, and then he would leave. What was our offense that we were excluded this time? I said to him, 'Ho, you villain! We are set against Kazan!'"

Emen commented, "Well said."

Uruz Koja asked, "Well, beys, what do you say?"

They said: "What should we say? As you have turned against Kazan, we are against him, too." Uruz brought the Koran, on which they all pressed their hands and took an oath, saying, "We are friends with your friend and foes to your foe."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Uruz presented pieces of clothing to all the beys, and then he turned to them and said: "Beys, Beyrek married a girl from among us, and so he is our relative. But on the other hand, he is Kazan's favorite. Let us have him come here on the pretense that he can make peace between us and Kazan. If he obeys us, it will go well for him; if he does not, I shall hold him by his beard and you can cut him to pieces with your swords. When Beyrek is thus removed, then good luck will be with us in dealing with Kazan."

They sent Beyrek a message. He was eating and drinking with his companions when the messenger from Uruz Koja arrived and greeted him. Beyrek acknowledged his greetings. The messenger said, "My khan, Uruz Koja sends you his greetings, and requests that you come and make peace between us and Kazan."

Beyrek said: "Very well." When they brought him his horse, he mounted and rode to Uruz Koja's house, along with his forty companions. The beys of the Outer Oghuz were all seated here. He entered and greeted them.

Beyrek asked, "Why did you invite me?"

Uruz Koja said: "I and all these beys sitting here have revolted against Kazan and have taken an oath on this." They brought the Koran and demanded, "We want you to take an oath, too."

Beyrek took an oath, saying, "I cannot revolt against Kazan." Then he continued:

"From the hand of Kazan I have had many gifts;  
If I fail to appreciate these,  
May they block my eyes.  
On his Kazilik stallion I rode many times;  
If I fail to appreciate this, may it carry my corpse.  
His good coats I have worn many a time;  
If I fail to appreciate them,  
May they serve as my burial shrouds.  
Many times I have sat in his colorful tent;  
If I fail to appreciate this, may it serve as a dungeon to me.  
I will not turn on Kazan, so let this be known to you!"

Uruz Koja became very angry. He grabbed Beyrek by the beard, but the beys were unwilling to kill him. Beyrek realized how angry Uruz Koja was, and he said:

"Uruz, had I known you were going to do this to me,  
Then I should have mounted my Kazilik horse;  
Then I should have worn my armor of steel;  
Then I should have brought my big sword made of steel;  
Then I should have put on a helmet strong;  
Then I should have taken my lance that is sixty hands long;  
Then I should have taken my brown-eyed beys.  
O wretch! Should I ever have come here like this?  
If I only had had any warning of this!  
Catching a man by such tricks is a womanish act.  
Did you learn this device from your wife, O wretch?"

Uruz Koja said: "Do not speak nonsense and risk your life. Come and take the oath."

Beyrek Said: "Allah is my witness. I have dedicated my life to the service of Kazan and I shall not desert him. If you wish, you can tear me into a hundred pieces."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Uruz Koja was again furious. He held Beyrek's beard firmly and looked at the beys, but he saw that no one moved. Swinging his big steel sword, he struck Beyrek's right thigh. Beyrek, covered with blood, was tottering. The beys were all scattered, and each now mounted his horse. Beyrek was also put on his horse, and a man riding alongside him held him in his saddle. Thus Beyrek was taken to his tent, where he was covered with his cloak. He spoke:

"My warriors, arise!  
Go cut off the tail of my fine gray horse.  
Cross in the night Ala Mountain with curving back;  
Pass through the beautiful, swift-running streams,  
Reaching the council of Kazan.  
Take off your white and wear only black.  
Say to him, 'Beyrek is dead', and may you live long."

He continued, "Tell him this: A man came from your treacherous uncle, Uruz Koja, asking for Beyrek, and Beyrek went. All the beys of the Outer Oghuz were assembled. We knew nothing of their plans. They brought the Koran, saying, 'We have revolted against Kazan and have taken an oath on this. We want you to take an oath, too.' Tell him that Beyrek refused to take an oath and said, 'I will not turn against Kazan.' Your treacherous uncle was angry and hit him with his sword, covering him with blood. He is now unconscious." He said, "If Kazan does not take vengeance against Uruz Koja for my blood, my hand will grasp him by the coat on the Day of Judgement." He then went on as follows:

"Warriors mine! Before Basat, the son of Uruz Koja, comes  
And lays waste my lands,  
And causes my camels to cry,  
And causes my Kazilik horses to neigh,  
And causes my white sheep to bleat,  
And causes my brides and pale daughters to weep—  
Before Basat, the son of Uruz, comes and takes my pale wife,  
And plunders my camp and my tribe—  
Let Kazan come here.  
Let him take revenge for my blood from Uruz;  
Let him take my pale wife for his son;  
Let him come and absolve me of my debts for the sake of my after-life.  
Let him know then that Beyrek has gone to the Sultan of Sultans."

The news reached Beyrek's father and mother, and great grief was set loose on the threshold of their white tent. Their geoselike daughters-in-law took off their white clothing and put on black, and they cut off the tail of Beyrek's light gray horse. Forty or fifty warriors put on black clothes or wrapped themselves in blue. They went to Kazan Bey, threw their turbans to the ground, and lamented greatly for Beyrek. They kissed Kazan's hand, saying: "Beyrek is dead! May you live long! Your treacherous uncle invited us by trickery, and we went. We saw that the beys of the Outer Oghuz had revolted against you. We did not know this until then. They brought the Koran and said: 'We have revolted against Kazan. You join us, too.' They had taken an oath. When Beyrek refused to take such an oath, your treacherous uncle was furious. He struck Beyrek with his sword where he sat, breaking one of his legs. Beyrek asked us to tell you that he has reached his Allah, and may you enjoy good health, my khan. But he requested that you take his revenge against Uruz Koja."

When Kazan heard this news, he took his handkerchief and wept aloud and showed tokens of great sorrow at his council. All the beys there cried. Kazan then shut himself up in his tent and did not appear at his council again for seven days. He just sat by himself and cried all the while.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

The beys assembled in the council, where Kazan's brother, Kara Gone, said: "Kilbash, go and tell my brother Kazan to come out. Tell him that we lost a young man from among us because of him. He willed that the revenge of his blood be taken. Let us go and bring the enemy to justice."

Kilbash said: "You are his brother. You go to him."

Finally the two of them went together and entered Kazan's tent. They greeted him and said: "May you enjoy good health, my khan. A young man has departed from our midst. He gave his life in your behalf. Let us take vengeance for his blood. Indeed, he requested this of you. What good does it do to cry? Get up and come to the meeting!"

Kazan said: "It is proper. Let the provisions be loaded, and let all the beys mount their horses."

When the beys had mounted their horses, they pulled forward Kazan's chestnut-brown horse, and he also mounted. Trumpets were blown, drums were beaten, and the beys rode day and night. The news reached Uruz Koja and all the beys of the Outer Oghuz. They said, "Here is Kazan coming!" They also gathered their forces, blew their trumpets, and confronted Kazan. So the Inner Oghuz and the Outer Oghuz met in combat.

Uruz Koja said, "Let Kazan be my opponent from the Inner Oghuz."

Emen said, "Let my opponent be Ters Uzamish."

Alp Rustem said, "Let my opponent be Okchi, the son of Ense Koja."

Each selected an opponent for himself. Troops were arranged in battle order; trumpets were blown and drums were beaten.

Uruz Koja spurred his horse, rode onto the field, and challenged Kazan, saying: "Ho, you scoundrel! You are my enemy. Come forward."

Kazan, holding his shield and whirling his lance above his head, said: "You villain! I shall teach you how to kill a man treacherously."

Uruz Koja spurred his horse toward Kazan, made an attempt to cut him with his sword, but missed him. It was now Kazan's turn. Holding his spear of sixty hands' length firmly under his arm, he rode against Uruz Koja and hit him. The spear pierced his breast and went right through his body. He toppled off his horse. Kazan signaled to his brother, Kara gone, and asked him to cut off Uruz's head. The beys of the Outer Oghuz had been watching all this. Now they got down their horses and fell at Kazan's feet, begging forgiveness and kissing his hands. Kazan forgave them.

In this manner he took revenge against his uncle for Beyrek's blood. He had Uruz Koja's tents, tribe, and camp plundered. The warrior beys were then satisfied. Kazan had a tent erected on the beautiful greengrass for his royal residence. Dede Korkut came and played the *kopuz* and told heroic tales about Moslem heroes.

"Where are the hero beys I used to talk about—  
Those who once claimed the world?  
Taken by death and concealed by earth.  
To whom has the world been left at last—  
The world with its coming and going—  
The world that is rounded off by death?"

Death is the end of long life, and separation is the ultimate fate of all. Let me pray, my khan. May you not deviate from your clean faith at the time of death. May your white-bearded father's place in the next world be paradise. May your white-haired mother's place be in paradise, too. May Almighty Allah never leave you at the mercy of the cruel and mean. We have offered a prayer of five words in your presence. May it be accepted. May those saying "Amen, amen" come to see the face of Allah. May He save you from your sins and forgive them for the sake of Mohammed Mustafa, O my khan.

## The Story of Seghrek, Son of Ushun Koja

During the time of Oghuz, there was a man by the name of Ushun Koja who has two sons. The elder son, who was called Eghrek, was a brave, reckless, and fine young man. He used to attend Bayindr Khan's meetings whenever he wished. The doors of the council of Kazan Bey, the bey of beys, were always open to him. He used to step over the beys and sit right in front of Kazan. He did not care about the rules of precedence.

One day, as usual, he stepped over the beys and sat in front, a man of the Oghuz, who was called Ters Uzamish said to him: "O son of Ushun Koja, each one of these beys sitting here has earned his place with his sword and bread. What have you ever done? Have you cut off heads, shed blood, fed the hungry, or dressed the naked?"

To this, Eghrek replied, "Ho, you, Ters Uzamish, do you think cutting off heads and shedding blood are acts of great skill?"

"Indeed they are," replied Ters Uzamish.

To these words of Ters Uzamish Eghrek could not say anything. A few minutes later, he stood up and asked Kazan Bey's permission to make a raid. The permission was granted. He announced this fact and began to raise men for the raid. Three hundred men with straight spears gathered round him.

There was eating and drinking in the tavern for five full days. After this, Eghrek raided the territory between the tip of Shiroguven and Gokche Sea. Much booty was taken. On the way back, he stopped by Alinja Castle. Kara Tekur had set aside a grove there that was stocked with all kinds of game, such as geese, hens, deer, and hares. This place was a trap set up for the Oghuz. One day the son of Ushun Koja stopped at the grove and entered it by tearing down its gate. He and his friends hunted fat deer, geese, and hens there. They ate and drank, unsaddled their horses, and took their harnesses off.

Kara Tekur had spies there who saw them and who reported to Tekur, saying: "A company of Oghuz horsemen came, broke the gate of the grove, and have now taken the saddles and harnesses off their horses. Hasten!" Six hundred black-clad infidels attacked them there, killing the Oghuz warriors and capturing Eghrek, whom they put in the dungeon of Alinja Castle.

The news crossed the dark mountains and bloody rivers until it reached the country of the strong Oghuz. Grief broke loose in front of Ushun Koja's house. His gooselike daughter took off her white clothing and put on black. Ushun Koja and his white-faced wife cried, "Son, Son."

Whoever has sides and ribs grows. Ushun Koja's son Seghrek grew to be a brave, gallant, and reckless young man. One day he happened to go to a meeting, where he ate and drank and became drunk. When he stepped outside to relieve himself, he saw there an orphan beating another boy. Saying, "Here! What is going on?" he slapped both of them.

The worm in an old mulberry and the tongue of an orphan both have a bitter taste. The orphan boy said: "Why do you hit me? Is it not bad enough that I am an orphan? If you think you are so mighty, go and rescue your

brother from Alinja Castle, where he is imprisoned."

"What is the name of my brother?" asked Seghrek.

"His name is Eghrek," replied the boy.

Seghrek said: "Eghrek goes well with Seghrek. Oh, that my brother should be alive and I should not care for him! Is it ever possible? I shall remain no longer in Oghuz territory without a brother." He then wept, saying, "My brother, the light of my dark eyes." He returned to the meeting inside, took leave of the beys, and said, "May you remain in peace."

They brought his horse, which he mounted at once and rode to his mother's house. There he dismounted and went to learn the truth of the matter from his mother's mouth. Let us see what he said to her.

"My mother, I stood up from where I sat,  
And, mounted on my black-maned Kazilik horse,  
I reached the foot of yonder Ala Mountain.  
There was a meeting in the bloody Oghuz land;  
To this I went. There, as we ate and drank,  
A messenger rode up astride a gray-white horse.  
He spoke about a young man they call Eghrek,  
Who has been captive now for many years.  
With permission of Almighty Allah,  
He left that prison to go home again.  
The old, the young, and everyone gave welcome to that man.  
Should I go, too, my mother? Speak to me!"

His mother replied as follows:

"Let me die for the mounth that brought such words, my son.  
Let me die for the tongue that uttered them, my son.  
If the mountain that lies out yonder, so dark,  
Once fell, now it rises again.  
If the beautiful swift-running stream  
Once dried up, now it rushes again.  
If the branches of the large spreading tree  
Withered once, it grows green once again.  
If the strong Oghuz beys should set out, you go, too, my son.  
And when you reach that man,  
Come down from your gray-white horse;  
First greet that man and shake his hands;  
Then kiss his hands, embracing him,  
And say: 'My brother, summit of my mountain dark,  
Why stand you here? Go home at once.'"

The son replied to his mother as follows:

"May your mouth be dreid up, Mother.  
May your tongue rot in your head.  
While I have a living brother,  
I cannot remain aloof.  
I cannot while brotherless remain on Oghuz land.  
Did Allah not demand respect for motherhood,

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

I should at once cut off your lovely head.  
I should at once spill out your red blood on the earth.  
O, Mother, cruel mother."

His father interrupted at this time. "You have been misinformed. That young man who escaped from the enemy prison is not your brother; he is someone else. Do not cause your white-bearded father and your old mother to cry."

The young man said:

"When three hundred sixty-six heroes ride forth on a hunt,  
If a fight should break out for the sake of a bloody deer,  
Those men who have brothers have no need of fear.  
But he without brothers cries out and keeps looking around,  
When struck on the back of his head,  
And pours bitter tears from brown eyes.  
Until you again see your brown-eyed son,  
Bey Father and Lady Mother, remain in piece."

His father and mother said: "Son, do not go. The news is not true; do not go, Son!"

But the young man said: "Do not keep me from my mission. I shall not return to the country of the strong Oghuz before I reach the castle in which my brother is imprisoned and find out whether he is dead or alive. If he is dead, I shall take revenge for him."

The father and mother kept crying. They sent a messenger to Kazan, saying: "Our son found out about his brother and wants to leave in search of him. What do you advise us to do?"

Kazan said, "Shackle his feet with horse fetters."

Seghrek had a fiance, and the parents had her married to him hastily. They slaughtered stallions, male camels, and rams. They put the young man in the nuptial tent, where he and his bride lay in the same bed. He took out his sword and put it between himself and his bride.

The girl said: "Take away your sword, young man. Let us have our wishes fulfilled. Let us embrace."

Seghrek said, "You, daughter of a wretch, If I ever fulfill my nuptial night before seeing my elder brother's face or revenging him if he is dead, may I be torn to pieces by my own sword and may I never have a son, and, if I have one, may he die before he is ten years old." He got out of bed, went out, and took a strong horse from the stable and saddled it. He put on his battle dress and armor to cover his knees and arms. He said: "Listen, girl! Wait a year for me; if I do not return in a year, wait two years for me; if I do not return in two years, wait three years for me; if I still do not return, then know that I am dead. Then slaughter my male horse and give my funeral feast. After that, marry whoever pleases your eyes and whomever your heart loves."

The girl replied as follows. Let us see, my khan, what she said.

"Young hero, I shall wait for you a year.  
If you do not return in one, I shall wait for you for two.  
If you do not return in two, I shall wait three or four.  
If you do not return in four, I shall wait for you five or six.  
I shall raise a tent at the junction of six roads

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

And ask for news of you from those who come and go.  
I shall give a horse and clothes to him who brings good news.  
I shall have him dressed in robes.  
I shall cut the head from him who brings bad news.  
No male, not even the male fly, shall touch me.  
Let us embrace in love, and then you may depart."

To this Seghrek replied: "O daughter of a scoundrel! I have taken an oath in behalf of the head of my brother. There is no turning back on my oath."

"Let them call me the shameless bride, but I shall not have anyone call me the unlucky bride. I shall go and tell my father-in-law and mother-in-law." She then continued as follows:

"Father-in-law, who is dearer to me than my father;  
Mother-in-law, who is dearer to me than my mother;  
All in vain are the drivers trying to make him return.  
Your big stallion is frightened and leaves;  
Your grooms cannot stop it and make it turn back.  
The ram of your fold is frightened and leaves;  
The shepherd cannot stop it and make it turn back.  
Your son with brown eyes remembers his brother and leaves;  
Your daughter-in-law with white face cannot make him turn back.  
Let this fact be known now to you!"

Seghrek's father and mother both sighed deeply. They stood up and begged their son not to go, but their pleading was in vain.

He said, "I must reach that castle where my brother is being held a prisoner."

His parents then gave him their consent, saying: "Go then, Son, and good luck to you. If it is your fate to return, may you then return unharmed and well."

He kissed his parents' hands, sprang upon his black stallion, and left by night. After galloping for three days and nights, he passed through Dere Sham and reached the edge of the forest where his brother was held captive in a castle. Noticing that some infidels were grazing horses there, he drew his sword and killed six of them. He drove away the horses by beating his small drum and led them into the forest. Having ridden for three days and nights, he felt very tired, and, tying the bridle of his horse to his wrist, he fell asleep.

An enemy scout had been watching him and now went and reported what he had seen to the infidel bey: "A crazy young man arrived from the Oghuz; he killed several grooms, drove off the horses, and ran them into the woods."

The infidel bey gave this order: "Pick sixty armed men, and let them go and catch him and bring him here." They picked sixty armed men, and these sixty infidels in armor fell upon the young man suddenly.

A suit of armor is judged by its clanking and a horse by the sound of its hoofs. You know, my khan, that horses hear well. The stallion that the young man had ridden warned him by pulling on its bridle. When the young man saw that a group of horsemen was coming, he sprang up. Repeating his belief in Mohammed—may his name be praised—he mounted his horse and struck at the black-dressed infidels with his sword until he drove them into the castle. Drowsiness overtook him again, and he fell asleep after tying the bridle of his horse to his wrist, just as he had done before.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Those infidels who had survived the battle returned and reported to the infidel bey what had happened. He said to them: "Shame upon you a hundred times. Sixty of you could not catch a single young man." This time, one hundred infidels rode against the young man. When the stallion warned the young man again, he saw that a large force was approaching. He arose and mounted his horse. Repeating his belief in Mohammed—may his name be praised—he started striking the infidels with his sword and again drove them back into the castle. He turned his horse and went back to his former place. Once more he could not help being drowsy, and once more he fell asleep, tying the bridle of his horse to his wrist. This time, the horse freed itself from its master's wrist and ran away.

The infidels went to their bey again. He said to them, "Let three hundred horsemen go against him this time!"

The infidels said: "No, we cannot. He will kill us all."

The infidel bey then asked: "What are we supposed to do, then? Go and bring that prisoner here. The belly of a kicking animal is torn by a butting animal. Give him a horse and armor, too."

They went and said to Eghrek: "Young man, our bey has been merciful to you. There is a crazy fellow over there who has been stealing the subsistence of travelers, shepherds, and children. Go kill him, and we shall set you free."

"All right," he said.

They let Eghrek out of dungeon, after shaving his beard and cutting his hair. They gave him a sword and a horse, and they assigned three hundred infidels to escort him. When they approached the young man, the three hundred infidels stopped at a distance.

Eghrek asked, "Where is that crazy fellow?" They pointed at him in the distance. Eghrek said, "Come, let us go and catch him."

The infidels said: "Our bey ordered you to catch him. You go."

Eghrek said: "There he is. He is asleep, but he is watching us under his arm. He will soon arise and cut us to pieces."

Eghrek said, "Then let me go and tie his hand and foot, and you come later." He sprang up from among the infidels and rode to where the young man lay. He dismounted and fastened the bridle of his horse to the branch of a tree. He saw that the stranger was a young man as handsome as the fourteenth day of the moon. He was asleep, and there were drops of tears on his face. He was totally unaware of anyone's coming or going. He walked around him and stood by his head. He noticed that the young man had his *kopuz* fastened to his wrist. He detached it and started playing and singing. Let us see, my khan, what he sang.

"Behold the young man who arose  
And mounted his black-maned Kizilik horse  
And crossed Ala Mountain with the curved back  
And shot through the fast-flowing river.  
Should a stranger ever sleep alone?  
Should he let his white hands be bound  
And himself be cast in a sty for pigs?  
Would he cause his white-bearded father and white-haired mother  
To lament and suffer for him?  
Why are you sleeping, young man?"

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Be not a fool; raise your handsome head, O young man!  
Open your light-brown eyes, young man!  
Sleep has captured your soul, Allah given;  
Permit not your hands to be tied round your arms;  
Cause not your white-bearded father and aged mother to cry.  
Who are you, young man, from the land of strong Oghuz?  
For the sake of great Allah, stand up.  
Know that you are surrounded  
By foes on four sides."

The young man awoke with a start and stood up. He grabbed the handle of his sword to strike the stranger, but he saw that he had a *kopuz* in his hand. He said: "O infidel, I spared your life for the sake of Dede Korkut's *kopuz*. If you had not had it in your hand, I should have sliced you in two for the sake of the head of my elder brother."

He took the *kopuz* from his hand, and then the young man addressed his elder brother as follows:

"At earliest morn I arose for my brother  
And rode on a light-gray horse for my brother.  
Infidel, say-Is a prisoner held in your castle?  
Let my luckless head be a sacrifice for you, O infidel."

His elder brother, Eghrek, replied to him as follows. Let us see, my khan, what he said to him.

"Let me die for your mouth, my brother.  
Let me die for your tongue, my brother.  
May I ask what your station is?  
May I ask what your watchword is  
When you lose yourself in darkness?  
Who is the khan who possesses your standard?  
Who is your hero who rides in the front on the day of battle?  
Who is your father, young man?  
It is shameful to ask for the name of a hero;  
But nevertheless, what is your name, young man?"

He then continued as follows:

"Are you the herdsman who grazes my camels?  
Are you the groom who takes my black stallions to graze?  
Are you the shepherd who grazes my flocks?  
Are you the vice-regent who whispers advice to my ear?  
Are you the small brother I left in the cradle?  
Tell me this, O young man.  
Let my luckless head be a sacrifice for you."

Seghrek then replied to his elder brother as follows:

"When I lose my way in darkness, my trust is in Allah.  
Our ruler is Bayindir Khan.  
If you want to know the name of my father,  
His name is Ushun Kojja.  
If you wish to be told my name;

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

It is Seghrek.  
Supposedly I have a brother  
By the name of Eghrek."

He then added:

"I am the herdsman who grazes your camels.  
I am the groom who grazes your horses.  
I am the brother you ledft in the cradle."

His elder brother, Eghrek, replied to him as follows. Let us see wha the said.

" I could die for your mouth, my brother.  
I could die for your tongue, my brother.  
Have you grown into manhood already, my brother?  
Did you ride so far just to search for your brother, my brother?"

The two brothers embraced and cuffed one another. Eghrek kissed his younger brother on the neck. Seghrek kissed his elder brother's hand.

The infidels were watching them from the other side.They said: "It looks as if they are wrestling. Perhaps our man will win." But they saw that they were embracing and talking and mounthing their stallions.

Then the two began riding toward the black–dressed infidels striking at them with their swords. They attacked the infidels, killing many and driving the rest into the castle. Then they entered the forest, released the mares, and made them run wild by playing small drums. They rode through Dere Sham River, and traveling by night, they reached the border of the Oghuz territory.

Seghrek thus saved his elder brother from the hands of the cruel infidel. He sent a messenger to his father with the good news and asked him to come out to meet them.

The messenger reached Ushun Koja and said: "Good news! Good cheer! Both of your sons have returned safely."

Ushun Koja rejoiced at hearing this. Drums rumbled. Golden and bronze trumpets were blown. Large colorful tents were erected. Stallions, male camels, and rams were slaughtered. Koja Bey went out to meet his sons. He got down from his horse, embraced his sons, and asked them, "Are you safe and well, sons?"

They went into his tent with the golden canopy, where there was rejoicing, aeting, and drinking. He arranged for a beautiful bride for his elder son, too. The two brothers were each other's wedding attendants. They entered their nuptial chambers and there had their wishes fulfilled. Dede Korkut came and sang songs and told legends.

No matter how long it may be, death waits at the end of life. May you not lose your clean faith at the time of death. May your sins be forgiven for the sake of Mohammed Mustafa, and may those saying "Amen" see the face of Allah, O my khan.

### **The Sack of the House of Salur Kazan**

One day the son of Ulash, the young of the feathering bird, the hope of the poor, the lion of Emet Stream, the tiger of the Karachuk Mountains, the owner of the chestnut–brown horse, the father of Khan Uruz, the son–in–law of Bayindir Khan, the pride of the crowded strong Oghuz people, the support of young warriors in distress, Salur

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Kazan roused himself. He had ninety large tents with golden tops erected on the black earth. He also had red silk carpets laid in ninety palces. Big earthenware pots were set in eighty rooms where rows of golden cups and jugs were palced. Nine beautiful infidel girls with black eyes, lovely faces, and braided hair, their hands hennaed up to their wrists, their nails all painted, all wearing dresses with red buttons on the breast, were offering drinks to the strong Oghuz beys.

After a while the strong wine went to Salur Kazan's head. Kneeling down he said: "Comrades, hear me; listen to my words. Our sides are sore from lying still for so long a time; our back bones are dry from idleness. COMrades, let us bestir ourselves and go hunting. Let us shoot birds and chase down big deer. Then let us return to resume our revelry, eating and drinking."

Delu Tundar, the son of Kara gone, then said, "Khan Kazan is right."

Kara Budak, the son of Kara Gone, then said: "Yes, my lord Kazan is right."

When they had spoken thus, horse-mouthed Uruz Koja, droppinh down on both knees, said: "My lord Kazan is right, but remember that you live along the border of Georgia with its foul, evil religion. Who is going to protect your camp during your absence?"

Kazan said, "Let my son, Uruz, stay behind with three hundred young men to protect my camp."

He then had his chestnut-brown horse borught forward. He mounted it quickly, and the Oghuz beys mounted their horses. Tundar rode his stallion, which had a white spot on its forehead. Kara Gone, brother of Kazan Bey, rode on his light-gray horse. Shir Shemseddin, who attacked Bayindir Khan's enemy, rode on his white horse. Beyrek, who fled from Parasar's Bayburt Castle, rode on his dark-gray stallion. Bey Yigenek, who once called Kazan with the chestnut-brown horse "a monk", rode on his dark-brown stallion. So many other strong Oghuz beys mounted their horses that I cannot possibly finish counting them. They looked like an army hunting on Ala Mountain.

Enemy spies soon repoted their departure to Shokli Melik, the wicked infidel. Seven thousand black infidels, they of a foul religion, with short black hair and coats slit in the back, came galloping on dappled horses and marched at midnight over Kazan Bey's camp/ They destroyed his large, gold-topped house and terrified the snow-white girls and brides. They stole stablefuls of his fine horses and many of his red caravan camels. They plundered his rich treasury. They carried away Burla Hatun, the tall lady of his house, and her forty narrow-waited girls. Kazan Bey's old mother was taken along, hanging across the neck of a black camel. Uruz Bey, the son of Khan Kazan, and his three hundred young warriors, all captured, were led away, hands tied and necks lashed together. Saru Kulmash, the son of Eylik Koja, was killed trying to guard the camp. Of all this, Kazan Bey had no knowledge whatever.

One of the infidel leaders said, "We have mounted Kazan's horses and plundered his treasury. We have captured his son, Uruz, along with his three hundred young warriors. We have carried off his caravan camels. We have taken his wife with her forty narrow-waisted girls. Al this pain we have inflicted on Kazan."

Another infidel leader added, "We must cause him even more pain."

Shokli Melik asked, "What is it, noble man? What is it that we yet must do to him?"

The infidel answered, "Kazan has te nhousand sheep at Kaplu Dervent. If we carry them away, we shall cause him still more pain."

Shokli Melik said, "Let six hundred men go and bring those sheep here."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Six hundred infidels were selected and horsed for this purpose, and the sheepfold was raided. In his sleep Karajuk the Shepherd had a fearful dream that caused him to awaken in terror and sit up in his bed. He took Kiyau Guju and Demir Guju, his two brothers, and with their help reinforced the gate of the fold and heaped up three piles of stones. As he took his large slingshot in his hand, six hundred infidels suddenly attacked him. One of the infidels sang out to him,

"Oh, shepherd so full of care in the evening,  
Shepherd who lights his fire in the snow and rain,  
Shepherd who stoes much cheese and cream,

We have destroyed Kazan Bey's large tents with golden chimneys. We have mounted his stablefuls of horses. We have led away his caravan camels. We have carried away his old mother. We have plundered his rich treasury. We have captured his snow-white maidens and brides. We have carried away Kazan's son, together with his three hundred young men. We have stolen Kazan's wife and forty narrow-waisted girls. Ho, you shepherd! Come over here, bow down your head, and press your hand upon your breast. Salute us, so that we may not kill you. Let us take you to Shokli Melik and ask him to give you a principality."

The shepherd answered with the following song:

"Speak not such nonsense, infidel dog,  
The wild one who drinks from the dish of my dog his foul water.  
Why boast of the dappled horse you ride?  
It is worse than the cap on my own.  
Why boast of your spear of sixty hands' length?  
It is weaker than my stick.  
Why boast of your sword, oh, infidel?  
It is worth far less than my crook.  
Why boast of your quiver with ninety shafts?  
My red-handled sling surpasses it.  
Come closer and see how the brave can strike!

The strong and bold shepherd, Karajuk, placed in his sling and hurled it at them, knocking down two or three of the infidels. With the second stone he slung he knocked down three or four and frightened the infidel host. Karajuk the Shepherd knocked down three hundred of the infidels with the stones he hurled at them from his slingshot. His two brothers, however, fell as martyrs to their arrows. When Karajuk ran out of stones, he placed sheep and goats in his sling, and each time he hurled an animal at the enemy he knocked down four or five of them. The infidels' eyes were filled with fear, and the world became a dungeon for them. They thought that the shepherd was going to kill them all, and so they fled. Karajuk took revenge for his dead brothers. He piled up the enemy dead, forming a large hill with their bodies. Then lighting a fire with his flint and steel, he burned a piece of his cloak and pressed the ashes against the wounds he had received. This done, he sat down by the road and began to cry, "Salur Kazan! Kazan Bey! Are you dead or alive? Do you know what has happened?"

As it happened, Salur Kazan, the hope of the strong Oghuz people, son-in-law of Bayindir Khan and the son of Ulash, had a terrible dream that night. Waking up with a start, he said: "My brother Kara Gone, do you know what I saw in my dream? It was a terrible dream. I saw my falcon dying in my hand. I saw a lightning bolt strike down my tent with the golden top. I saw a black cloud descending upon my camp. I saw mad wolves attacking my house. I felt the black camel biting my neck. I saw my black hair rise like spears and cover my eyes. I saw my ten fingers dipped in blood to my wrists. I wonder why I had such a dream? Ever since I had this dream I have been unable to think clearly. My brother khan, come and interpret my dream for me."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Kara Gone said: "What you say about a black cloud has to do with power. Snow and rain from such a cloud would mean troops. Hair represents sorrow, and blood means trouble. I cannot interpret the rest. May Allah interpret it."

Hearing him speak in this way, Kazan said: "Let the hunt go on, and let my troops remain here. I shall spur the chestnut-brown horse and reach home by noon, covering three days' journey in a single day. If I find my house in peace, I shall return before evening. If I do not find peace there, you take care of yourselves." Speaking thus, he spurred his chestnut-brown horse and departed. When he reached home after a long journey, he found nothing left there but the raven and the hound. Upon seeing this he sang to himself.

"My people, my tribe, my home!  
Neighbors now to wild asses and deer!  
My beautiful home—oh, how did the enemy find you?  
My big white tent is gone, and only the ground beneath it remains.  
Now there is only the place my old mother used to sit.  
Now only the target remains at which Uruz my son used to shoot.  
Now quite empty is the square where the Oghuz once pranced their mounts.  
Now only the hearth remains where once the black kitchen stood."

When Kazan saw his camp in this condition, his black eyes filled with bloody tears. His veins boiled, and his breath came in gasps. He spurred the flanks of his chestnut-brown horse and set off after the enemy. When he reached a stream, he said to himself: "This water must have seen the face of Allah. Let me talk with it." Let us hear what Kazan said to this stream.

"Oh, water that gushed from under the rocks.  
Oh, water that tosses the ships made of wood!  
Oh, water once sought by Hasan and Huseyin!  
Oh, water a treasure for gardens and vineyards!  
Oh, water so cherished by Ayshe and Fatma!  
Oh, water the drink of all beautiful horses;  
Oh, water drunk deeply by thirsty red camels;  
Oh, water near which lie the flocks of white sheep.  
Do you know what disaster has come to my camp? Oh, speak!  
May my luckless head be a sacrifice to you."

But how could the water inform him?

After he had crossed the stream, he met a wolf. He said to himself: "This wolf has a blessed face. He may know. Let me speak to him." Let us hear what he said to the wolf.

"When the night grows dark, then comes your day.  
When it rains and snows, then you stand erect.  
When big black stallions see you, they neigh.  
When big red camels see you, they cry.  
When you see some white sheep, you drive them along with your tail.  
You destroy with your back the string walls of the fold.  
You carry away fat sheep two years old;  
You swallow with greed their bloody tails.  
You fight with the fierce barking dogs;  
You make run through the night the shepherds who kindle their fires.  
If you know what disaster has come to my camp, oh, speak!  
May my luckless head be a sacrifice to you."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

But how could the wolf tell him this?

He walked on. Along the way he met Karajuk the Shepherd's dog, to which he spoke. Let us hear what he said.

"You bark, 'Vaf! Vaf!' when the evening begins.  
You drink 'Chap! Chap!' when the buttermilk spills.  
You scare away thieves that come in the dark;  
You cause them to run with your nooise.  
If you know what disaster has come to my camp, oh, speak!  
Oh, dog, I shall tend you as long as I live."

But how could a dog tell? Whining, it fell upon the foot of Kazan's horse and lay crouching there. Kazan struck the dog with a stick, and it returned where it came from. Following the dog, Kazan came upon Karajuk the Shepherd. When he saw the shepherd, he addressed him at once. Let us hear what Kazan said to him.

"Oh, shepherd, so full of care in the evening;  
Oh, shepherd who lights his fire in the snow and rain,  
Now hear me, and hark to my words!  
Have you noticed my household passing this way?  
Now speak! I sacrifice my luckless head for you."

The shepherd answered,

"Oh, Kazan, were you dead or lost?

Where were you wandering—where?

The day before yesterday your family passed this way. Your old mother was hanging across the neck of a camel. Your wife, tall Burla Hatun, passed this way, crying, with her forty slim—waisted girls. With his three hundred young men your son, Uruz, was walking, a prisoner, barefooted and bareheaded, while the infidels rode on your many strong horses, led along your caravan camels, and carried off your treasury rich in golden coins."

When Kazan heard these things, he sighed deeply and almost lost his senses. The entire world tuned black before him. Then he said to the shepherd: "May your mouth dry up, oh, shepherd. May your tongue rot, and may Allah write misfortune on your forehead, oh, shepherd."

To these words of Kazan Bey, the shepherd replied: "My master Kazan, why do you curse me in this way? Is there no faith in your breast? Six hundred infidels fell upon us, slaying my two brothers. I fought the infidels, killing three hundred of them, and I did not let them carry off your fat rams and lambs. I received there wounds, and I was alone and exhausted. Is this my crime?" Then he continued:

"Give me your horse of chestnut brown.  
Give me your spear sixty hand lengths long.  
Give me your dappled shield.  
Give me your sword of black steel.  
Give me the arrows, all eight, in your quiver.  
Give me your bow, white—stringed and strong.  
Then let me reach the infidel.  
Kill all his newly born.  
Let me wipe off the blood with my sleeve from my forehead.  
If I die for your sake, let me die.  
If Allah Almighty permits, let me rescue your family."

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

When the shepherd said these things, Kaan, overcome by sorrow, rode away. The shepherd followed him. When Kazan looked back, he saw the shepherd and asked him where he was going. The shepherd said, "My master Kazan, if you are going to bring your family back, I am going to avenge the blood of my brothers."

Then Kazan said: "Young shepherd, I am hungry. Have you anything to eat?"

Of course, master Kazan," said the shepherd. "I had a lamb roasted last night. Let us dismount, sit down by that tree, and eat it."

They got down from their horses. The shepherd took out his bag, and they ate. While eating, Kazan thought to himself, "If I go there with the shepherd, the strong Oghuz beys will talk of it and say that I was not able to deal with the infidels without the assistance of a shepherd." Regaining his strength, Kazan tied the shepherd firmly to a tree, mounted his horse, and rode away, shouting. "Ho, shepherd, pull up that tree before you become hungry and weak, or wolves and wild birds will eat you."

Gathering all his strength, Karajuk the Shepherd pulled the tree out of the earth, roots and all, and started walking after Kazan. When Kazan saw that the shepherd was coming along with the tree tied to his back he asked, "What is the tree for?"

The shepherd replied, "Master, when you fight with the enemy and become hungry, I am going to cook for you with the wood of this tree."

Kazan was pleased with this answer, and, dismounting from his horse, he untied the shepherd's hands, kissed him on the forehead, and said to him, "If Allah saves my family, I shall make you the master of the horse." Then the two of them set out again together.

Now Shokli Melik was happily eating and drinking with the other infidels. He said: "Fellows, you know there is a way in which we can make Kazan suffer more. Let us have the tall Lady Burla Hatun pass around drinks.

Burla Hatun heard this, and her heart and soul burned with fire. She went to the forty slim-waisted girls and gave them the following instructions: "When one of you is grabbed and asked to point out the wife of Kazan, then all forty of you will shout, 'I am the wife of Kazan', at the same time."

Shokli Melik's men came and asked, "Which one of you is Kazan Bey's wife?" There were at once forty answers, and they could not know which one was Kazan Bey's wife. They went to report this to the infidel: "We grabbed one and asked, but there were forty answers. We could not know which one was his lady."

The infidel Shokli Melik said: "Go find Uruz, the son of Kazan, and hang him from a hook. Then cut chunks of meat from his white flesh, and fry them. Send them to the forty noble girls. Whoever eats is not Burla Hatun. Whoever does not eat is she. Then bring her here and let her pass around drinks."

Burla Hatun, the tall lady, went to the side of her son and spoke to him. Let us see what she said.

"Oh, Son, my son, my dear son!  
Do you know what is happening now?  
Whispering, "Fisil, fisil,"  
The infidels drew up their plans.  
Son, the support of my house with its chimney of gold,  
The bloom of my goose-white daughter and bride;  
Oh, Son, my son, my dear son,  
Whom I carried nine months in my narrow womb,

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

And I brought to thàs world àn the tenth;  
Son, whom I nursed in a cradle with golden straps,  
Do you know what is happening now?"

She then went on: " The infidels have agreed to do a terrible thing. They said, 'Take Uruz, the son of Kazan, out of this prison, and hang him by the neck with a rope. Then hook him through both shoulders and tear his white felsh into pieces. Fry these pieces and sen d them to the forty girls of the beys. Whoever eats of this is not Kazan's lady, but whoever refuses to eat it is she. Then, let us take her to our bed and make her serve us drinks.' What do you say, Son? Shall I eat of your flesh, or shall I enter the bed of the infidel with the foul religion? Shall I ruin your father Kazan's honor? What shall I do, Son?"

"May your mouth shrivel up, and amy your tongue rot, oh, Mother. If a mother's right had not been a right given by Allah, I would have got up and grasped you by the throat and trampled upon you with my heavy boots, kicking your white face into the black earth, until blood streamed from your nose, thus teaching you the meaning of sweet life. What a thign to say!Dear Mother, do not com etoward me. Do not cry for me. Let them hang me from a hook. Let them cut my flesh. Let them fry it and send it to the forty girls of the beys. While they take one bite, yuo take two bites, so that the infidels cannot find you out, so that you may not go to the bed of the infidel with the foul religion and seerve him drinks. See that you do not stain my father's honor." When th e young man spoke these words, tears were running down from his eyes.

The tall and slim-waisted Burla Hatun fainted and fell, tearing her cheek, red as an autumn apple. and then her long black hair. She cried hysterically, clling, "Son, Son!"

Uruz spoke as follows:

"Dear Mother, what wailing is this?  
Why do you cry and lament?  
Why are you burning my breast,  
Making me think of the days that are past?  
Will there not be a colt  
Where Arabian horses dwell?  
Where the red camels live  
Will there not be a camel calf?  
Will there not be a lamb  
Whre the white sheep are?  
As long as you and my father live,  
Could you not have another son like me?"

When Uruz spoke in this manner, she could no longer stay there, but walked outside and joined the forty girls with slim waists. The infidels carried Uruz to the place of execution. There Uruz addressed them, saying: "You infidels, there is no doubt about the unity of Allah. Let me speak tothat tree." He addressed the tree loudly. Let us see what he said.

"Be ot offended, O tree, by my calling you 'tree'.  
The gates of Medina and Mecca were made of you.  
The staff of Moses, to whom Allah spoke, was of you, too.  
The bridges that cross great rivers are made of you.  
The ships in the dark, dark seas are made of you.  
The saddle of Ali, leader of gallant men, was made of your wood.  
The handle and sheath of zulfikar, his sword, were made of you.  
The cradle of Hasan and Huseyin was of your wood.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

Women and men are equally frightened by you.  
When I look upward, I see not your head;  
When I look downward, I see not your roots.  
If they hang me from you, support me not.  
If you do, then would that my youthful vigor could stop you,  
oh, tree.  
If then you should stand in my land, oh, tree.  
I should order my slaves, black Indian slaves,  
To tear you apart in a thousand pieces, oh, tree."

Then he went on.

I am grieved that I leave behind stables of horses,  
Grieved to be parted from comrades of mine,  
Grieved that my falcon rests not in my hand,  
Grieved for my hound that runs and retrieves,  
Grieved for myself that I ruled not my realm,  
Grieved for my youth, that I knew not enough of it."

Saying this, he cried bitterly, and his heart was burned with pain.

In the meantime, Salur Kazan and Karajuk the Shepherd suddenly reached that place. The leather of the shepherd's sling was made of the hair of three goats, and its ring was made of the hair of one goat. It was capable of hurling twelve batmans of stone at each shot. The stone it hurled seldom fell to the ground, and when it did, it would fly as dust and burn as fire. For three years no grass grew at the place where it fell. Fearing his sling, the wolf would not approach the fat sheep and the weak lamb to eat them when they were left in the wilderness. When Karajuk the Shepherd released his sling, the whole world was darkened to the eyes of the infidel.

Kazan said, "Karajuk shepherd, let me ask the enemy to deliver my mother to me, so that she may not be trampled under the hoofs of the horses." Like the feet of horses, the tongues of poets are quick. Kazan called the enemy and said:

"O Shokli Melik!  
You who are taking my tents with their chimneys of gold—  
May they give you shade.  
You who are taking my treasure and wealth—  
May they yield you much gold.  
You who are taking away Burla Hatun along with two score of her slim-waisted girls—  
May they still be your prisoners.  
You who are taking my Uruz, my son, along with his forty young men—  
May they serve as your slaves.  
You who are taking away my stables of beautiful horses—  
May you ride on their backs.  
You who are taking away my old mother—  
O infidel, give me my mother back  
And I shall return without a fight.  
This I intend to do."

The infidel answered:

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

"O Kazan!

We are taking away your white tents with their chimneys of gold—

They are ours.

We are taking away Burla Hatun, along with two score of her slim—waisted girls—

They are ours.

We are taking Uruz, your son, along with his forty young men—

They are ours.

We are taking away your stables of beautiful horses,

Along with your caravan camels—

They are ours.

We are taking away your old mother—

She is ours. We shall not give her back.

We shall give her instead to Yahyan the priest,

From whom she will bear a son. We shall make him your foe."

When Karajuk the Shepherd heard this he became furious. Pressing his lips he spoke as follows:

"Irreligious and ignorant infidel!

Ill—bred and uncivilized infidel!

The snow—covered mountains yonder are old,

And grass does not grow on their slopes.

From red rivers grown old, the water stops flowing.

Beautiful horses in age bear no colts.

After years the red camel produces no young.

The mother of Kazan is old and no longer gives birth.

For good seed give your black—eyed daughter, O Shokli Melik, to Kazan

So that he may beget a son from her, O infidel,

A son whom you may convert to an enemy of Kazan."

Meanwhile, strong Oghuz beys arrived. My khan, let us see who they were. There was Kara Gone, who was born at the mouth of the Kara River, whose cradle was made of the hide of a black bull, who in a fit of anger could crumble stone into ash, who could wind his moustache seventimes around his neck, a hero of heroes, the brother of Kazan Bey. He said, "Here I am, brother Kazan. Strike with your sword."

Let us see who came after him. It was Deli Tundar, the son of Kiyani Seljuk, who had stormed and captured the iron door at the Pass of Demir Kapu, who made men scream at the point of his spear of sixty fist—lengths. He said: "Here I am, my lord, brother Kazan. Strike with your sword."

Let us see, my khan, who followed him: Kara Budak, the son of Kara Gone, who stormed and took the Castle of Mardin and Hamid, who made the steel—bowed Kipchak Melik vomit blood, who came and married Kazan's daughter in a manly way, the young man whom the white—bearded Oghuz elders praised whenever they saw him, who wore a red silk robe and rode a horse with a tassel made of tails of oxen. He said, "Here I am, my lord Kazan. Strike with your sword."

Let us see, my khan, who followed him: Shir Semseddin, the son of Gaflet Koja, who besieged, without receiving any orders, the enemy of Bayindir Khan, making sixty thousand infidels vomit blood, who could let snow lie on the mane of his light—gray horse. He said: "Here I am, my lord. Strike with your sword."

Let us see, my khan, who came after him. There came Beyrek with the Gray Horse, who escaped from Bayburt Castle and postponed his nuptial night in order to save his fellow beys, the hope of seven girls, the symbol of the strong Oghuz people, and Kazan Bey's trustworthy aide. He said: "Here I am, my brother Kazan. Strike with

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

your sword."

Let us see, my kahn, who came after him. There came Bey Yigenek, the son of Kazilik Koja, a handsome young man like the *chalkara bird*, wearing an embroidered belt and golden rings in his ears, a young man who could knock down all the Oghuz beys one by one from their horses. He said: I am, my lord Kazan. Strike with your sword."

Let us see, my khan, who followed him. There came Kazan Bey's maternal uncle, the horse-mouthed Uruz Koja, who would not be able to cover his heels if he made a fur coat of the skin of sixty sheep, a man with huge limbs but slim legs. He said: I am, my bey Kazan. Go on. Strike with your sword."

Let us see who came after him. There followed Bugduz emen with the bloody moustache, who had seen the Prophet's face and became his representative among the Oghuz people, a man from whose moustache blood oozed when he was angry. He said: I am, my lord. Go on. Strike with your sword."

Let us see who came after him. There came Alp Eren, the son of Eyilik Koja, who despised the infidels like dogs and let his horse swim through the stream of Aighir-G&ouml;zler, broke the locks of fifty-seven castles, married the daughter of Ak Melik Cheshme, made the Sofi Sandal Melik vomit blood, wrapped himself in forty gowns and stole the lovely daughters of the beys of thirty-seven castles, bared their breasts, and kissed them on their lips. He said: I am, my lord Kazan. Go on. Strike with your sword."

Many other Oghuz beys came, so many that I cannot finish counting them. They took ablution with clean water, put their honest foreheads to the earth, performed two *rekats* of the prayer service, and glorified the name of Mohammed. Then they boldly rode upon the enemy and began striking him with their swords. Rumbling drums were beaten, and bronze trumpets with golden spirals were blown. That day the brave showed themselves, while the cowards sought hiding places. It was dooms-day-like battle, and the field was strewn with many heads cut off, like so many balls. Fine horses ran, their shoes striking the earth. Glittering spears were thrust, and black steel swords were struck, their blades torn. Three-feathered beechen arrows were shot, their heads raining down. It was like the breaking of doomsday. Beys were separated from their beys.

Outer Oghuz beys commanded by Deli Tundar attacked from the right, while Deli Budak, the son of Kara gone from the left with his own gallant men. In the center, Inner Oghuz beys led by Kazan attacked Shokli Melik. The infidel was thrown off his horse by Kazan Bey, who then cut off his thoughtless head, letting his red blood run on the ground. Deli Tundar, the son of Kiyani Seljuk, attacked Kara Tuken Melik from the right flank, putting the enemy to the sword and throwing him to the ground. Deli Budak, the son of Kara Gone, attacked Bugajik Melik from the left flank, hitting the enemy with a six-piece club and darkening the world for him. Clinging to his horse's neck, he soon fell to the ground. Kazan Bey's brother tore the banner tipped with a horse tail that he took from an infidel, throwing its bearer to the ground. Hills and valleys were covered with the corpses of infidels over which black birds began to gather. Twelve thousand infidels were slain, while Oghuz casualties were five hundred. Kazan Bey did not pursue those who fled and did not kill those who surrendered. The strong Oghuz beys took great amounts of booty. Kazan Bey recovered his son, the members of his household, and his treasury, and turned homeward. He sat again on his golden throne. He made Karajuk the Shepherd the chief of his stable. There was eating and drinking for seven days. He set free forty male slaves and forty female slaves on the occasion of the safe return of his son. He rewarded gallant men with large pieces of land, and he dressed them with trousers, cloaks, and coats to honor them.

Meanwhile, Dede Korkut came and praised their victory, composing this legend and saying:

"Where now are the noble heroes who thought that the world was theirs?  
Where are those men who once claimed the whole world?  
Now death has carried them off, and the earth concealed them.

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

To whom did the mortal world remain—  
The world where men come and go,  
The world which is rounded off by death?"

Let me pray for you, my khan: "May your snow-covered mountains remain standing and your strong shade trees be not cut down. May your beautiful running streams never dry up, and may Almighty Allah never allow you to lie at the mercy of the wicked. May your white horse never slip while running. May your fine steel sword never be broken in combat. May the resting place of your white-bearded father and white-haired mother be in paradise. May Allah keep you loyal to your faith. May those who say "Amen"; see the face of Allah.

We have spoken a short prayer in your presence. May it be accepted. May you never be deprived of the hope that is given you by Allah. May Allah forgive you all your sins in the name of Mohammed, my khan.

### The Story of Yigenek, Son of Kazilik Koja

One day, Bayindir Khan, the son of Kam Gan, arose and ordered that his magnificent tent be erected on the surface of the black earth. Its colorful canopy rose high into the sky. Silk carpets were spread out by the thousand. The princes of the Inner Oghuz and the Outer Oghuz were gathered together, talking, eating, and drinking.

There was a man there by the name of Kazilik Koja, who was the vizier of Bayindir Khan. When the strong wine and gone to his head, he fell to his large knees and asked Bayindir Khan for permission to carry out a raid on the enemy. Bayindir Khan consented to his request, saying, "Go wherever you wish to go."

Kazilik Koja was a man of experience and competence. He gathered his old warriors and set out with them, carrying provisions for their trip. They crossed many mountains, hills, and dales, until finally one day they arrived before Duzmurd Castle on the Black Sea, where they set up their camp.

The castle was under the command of an infidel prince called Direk Tekur, the son of Arshun. A man sixty yards tall, he used to throw a club weighing sixty *batmans*, and he had a very strong and tightly strung bow. As soon as Kazilik Koja reached the castle, he began to attack it. The infidel prince came out and demanded a single warrior with whom to fight. As soon as Kazilik Koja saw him, he rushed at him like the wind, and stuck him like glue. He struck at the infidel's neck with his sword, but was unable to cut it. Now it was the infidel's turn to strike, and he hit Kazilik Koja with his huge club weighing sixty *batmans*. When he received this blow, Kazilik Koja thought the mortal world was falling in on him. Blood gushed from his body. They captured him and imprisoned him in the castle, while his warriors fled. Kazilik Koja remained in that castle for exactly sixteen years. Although a man by the name of Emen went six different times to take the castle, he failed each time.

At the time of the capture of Kazilik Koja, he had a son who was one year old. He reached the age of fifteen thinking that his father was dead. It had been forbidden that anyone tell him the truth. This young man's name was Yigenek. One day when Yigenek sitting and talking with the beys, he was involved in an argument with Budak, the son of Kara Gone, and some harsh words were exchanged between the two. Budak said: "Why do you talk so much? If you think you are someone important, go and rescue your father from the prison where he has been held for sixteen years."

When Yigenek heard this, his heart jumped and his chest heaved. He got up and went to the presence of Bayindir Khan. Putting his face to the ground, he said,

"You, who majestic white tent stands alone in the dawn,  
With its canopy made of blue Atlas;  
You, who own stables of powerful horses;

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

You, at whose call many chamberlains jump;  
Man of abundance, from whom butter falls when he moves;  
Support of young warriors in time of distress;  
The hope of the poor;  
The main pole of all Turkestan;  
The young of the full-feathered bird;  
The lion of Emet Stream;  
The tiger of Karachuk;  
O, Royal Hingness, give help!  
Give me troops and send me to the castle where my father is imprisoned."

Bayindr Khan commanded, " Let the twenty-four banner-beys assemble here!" He then said to Yigenek: " Deli Tundar, the son of Kiyar Seljuk, who fought at Iron Gate Pass, amking his enemy cry at the point of his spear, whe never asks his enemy 'Who are you?' when he reaches him –let him go with you. Delik Evren, the son of Eylik Koja, who made his horse swim across the River of Aygir Gozler and took the locks from fifty-seven castles –let him also go with you. Ilalmish, the son of Yaghrinchi, whose beechen arrows always pass through the double bastions –let him go with you. Let Rustem, the son of Toghson, who cries bitterly if he does not see the enemy three times, also go with you. Let even Deli Evren who rescues men from the mouths of monsters, go with you. Let Sogan Saru, who says, 'I can reach from one end of the earth to the other,' also go." From among the countless Oghuz heroes, Bayindr Khan ordered twenty-four brave banner beys to accompany Yigenek.

During that same night, Yigenek had a dream; and in the morning he told the following dream to his companions: "O, beys, while asleep last night, this poor and unfortunate head of mine had a dream. When I opened my eyes, I saw the world crowded with heroes with me, and then I received advice from the the white-bearded Dede Korkut. I crossed the long ranges of black mountains and reached a sea lying below me. There I built myself a boat and made a sail for it out of my shirt. I sailed through the sea lying under me. On the other side of the black mountains I saw a man whose head and forehead were shining. I rose and went toward him, holding my spear in my hand. I went and stood before him. When I was about to pierce him, I looked at him out of the corner of my eye and realized that he was my maternal uncle Emen. I greeted him and asked him who he was among the Oghuz. Lifting his eyes, he looked at me and asked, 'Yigenek, my son, where are you going?' I replied, 'I am going to duzmurd Castle, where I have heard my father is imprisoned.' My uncle spoke to me as follows:

'I once had seven warriors faster than the wind.  
My warriors were like wolves out of the seven mountains.  
My bowstring then was pulled by seven men  
To shoot my beechen arrows with gold fins.  
Winds blew, rains fell, and fog descended–  
I tried to to take that castle seven times, and then returned.  
You cannot show more courage there than I;  
My Yigenek, turn back!'"  
Yigenek in his dream spoke as follows to his uncle:  
"When you arose from where you sat,  
You did not lead forth brown-eyed princely men with you;  
You did not gallop out with well-known beys.  
You must have taken mercenary troops for five *akchas* apiece,  
And that is, why you failed to take the fort."  
He continued,  
"Stewed meat is good to eat. slice after slice.  
A powerful horse is good in time of need.  
Good luck is useful while it lasts.  
The mind is good if it does not forget;

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

And valor, too, is good if there is no retreating from the foe."

Yigenek told his this dream to his companions. It happened that his uncle Emen was not very far away at that moment. He joined the beys, and they all went forward together. They finally reached Duzmurd Castle, around which they set up camp.

As soon as the infidels saw them, they reported their arrival to Direk Tekur, the son of Arshun. When that cursed fellow heard this, he came out of his castle fully armed and challenged any single warrior to fight. Deli Tundar, the son of Kiyam Seljuk, stood up, holding his sharp spear as long as sixty fists under his arm, and tried to knock down the infidel standing before him, but he failed. The infidel bey grabbed his spear and shook it out of his hand, and dealt Tundar such a mighty blow with his club that weighed sixty *batmans* that it sent him sprawling. The wide world seemed like a narrow place to Tundar. He turned his horse back and withdrew from the fight.

Next, Deli Evren, who never turned from the enemy, spurred his horse and tried to strike the infidel and knock him off his horse with his six-jointed club, but he could not do it. The infidel grabbed his club from his hand and struck him with his mace. He also turned his Kazilik horse back and abandoned the fight. My khan, twenty-four banner-beys were defeated by this infidel bey.

Then Yigenek, the son of Kazilik Koja, the fresh young man, put himself under the protection of Allah and prayed to Him as follows:

"You are higher than the highest;  
No one know how high you are,  
Beloved Allah!  
You were not by mother born.  
You were not by sire begotten.  
You have eaten no one's food.  
You have brought to no one trouble.  
You are everywhere the same.  
You are the eternal Allah.  
You have given a crown to Adam.  
You have placed a curse on Satan,  
And have dismissed him from your presence  
Because of his offense.  
When Nimrod shot an arrow at the sky,  
You stopped it with the split-belied fish.  
There is no limit to your power.  
There is no limit to your height.  
Your form is incorporeal.  
Great Allah, who does not permit to thrive  
One whom He strikes,  
Who moves with silent footsteps,  
O glorious Allah, who send mortal man to heaven,  
But angered, He destroys the objects of His wrath.  
Almighty Allah, I affirm your oneness.  
Help me!  
I ride against the black-dressed infidel.  
I leave my future in your hands."

Having spoken thus, he let his reins fall loose. He rode like the wind and stuck like glue. He struck the infidel's shoulder with his sword, tore through his armor, and gashed his flesh six fingers deep. The infidel's black boots

## The Book Of Dede Korkut

were filled with blood. His ill-starred head was dizzy, and he was stunned. He turned and rode toward the castle with Yigenek in pursuit. As he was going through the castle gate, Yigenek dealt him such a blow on the neck with his sword that his head fell to the ground like a ball. After this, Yigenek turned back and went to the place where his troops waited.

Kazilik Koja, who was imprisoned in that castle, was released and as he came out he asked, "Ho! princely warriors! Who killed the infidel?" Let us see, my khan, what else he said.

"I left the female camel pregnant in my herd;  
I wish I knew if it bore male or female.  
I left the black sheep in the land of mourning pregnant;  
I wish I knew if it bore ram or ewe.  
I left my brown-eyed lawful wife with child;  
I wish I knew if it be girl or boy.  
For Allah's sake, O princely men, tell me the truth."  
Yigenek spoke. Let us see, my khan, what he said.  
"You left the female camel pregnant in your herd;  
A male camel was born.  
You left the black sheep in the land of mourning pregnant;  
A ram was born.  
You left your brown-eyed lawful wife with child;  
A lion was born."

Yigenek embraced his father, and then all the beys embraced him. After that, they all attacked the castle and plundered it. Yigenek and his father embraced and rejoiced in finding one another. They howled like the wolves of lonely mountains and expressed their gratitude to Allah. They pulled down the chapel of the castle and turned it into a mosque. They had a sermon delivered there in the name of beloved Allah. They put aside a rare bird, fine fabrics, a beautiful girl, a gold-embroidered dress, and one-fifth of their spoils as gifts to Bayındri Khan. The rest they gave to the heroes. Then they returned home.

Dede Korkut came and told legend and sang heroic songs, and he said: "Let this Oghuz legend be Yigenek's.

Let me pray, my khan. May your native black mountains never fall down. May your large shade tree never be felled. May your white-bearded father go to heaven. May your white-haired mother's place of rest be paradise, and may Allah never let her deviate from the true faith in her last years. We have offered a prayer of five words in your presence. May it be accepted. May Allah forgive your sins for the sake of Mohammed Mustafa—his name be praised—oh, my khan.