

The Love Story of Mir Shahdad and Mehnaz

Translation by Maria Sarfaaz

The love story of Mir Shahdad and Mehnaz is of Balochi origin. Mir Shahdad Khan Rind belonged to a prominent family of Balochistan. He was a brave warrior who had helped the Mughal King Humayun regain his throne by defeating the Suris.

Mir Shahdad Khan was very fond of his second wife Mehnaz who loved him too. The couple was leading a happy life but their happiness was short lived. Mir Shahdad's first wife, Murgu was jealous of Mehnaz and was always thinking of ways to demean her in Shahdad's eyes. One day she succeeded in her evil plan; she disguised herself as a man and somehow convinced Mir Shahdad that Mehnaz was involved with Umer, a shepherd. Mir Shahdad was furious and hurled accusations at Mehnaz; he accused and beat her while she pleaded she was innocent. There was nothing Mehnaz could do to prove her innocence; so, heartbroken she went back to her family. In this situation, there is a custom in Balochistan, which says that anyone who wants to prove his or her innocence must undergo an extremely tough test. To prove her innocence and restore her family's honour Mehnaz agrees to undertake an ordeal. Both families come to witness the trial. Mehnaz was asked to put her hand in a pot of boiling oil and recover a ring. Mehnaz did so without hurting herself. Mir Shahdad's joy knew no bounds and wished to take her back with him. Mehnaz, on the other hand, was deeply hurt by his accusations and refused to go with him. She asked him to divorce her and with a heavy heart, Mir Shahdad Rind had to comply. To further wound Shahdad's pride, Mehnaz married the shepherd, Umer and left Shahdad for regret and remorse in life.