

Story #24 (Tape #10)
1961-1962

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#24 son -- clever

The #24 Clever Son and the Confused #24 Lovers

There was once a hoca in a village who became very friendly with a woman whose husband was away on business. This woman had a clever son who observed what was going on between his mother and the hoca. One day he said to his mother, "Mother, doesn't this hoca come to our home very often?"

"Well, son," said the woman, "he is a close friend of your father, and that is why he comes to visit us."

The next day the hoca came to call again, and while he was there, the woman said to him, "Tomorrow I am going to bake a goose for you. Tell me in what field you will be plowing so that I can bring it to you."

"I will be in the far field to the south," said the hoca.

"Very well, I shall bring it there when it is cooked."

The next day the woman killed the goose, but before she could finish preparing it, her husband came home from his trip. He returned earlier than she had expected. When he saw that his wife was cooking a goose, he said, "What is the matter? What are you cooking that for?"

"The whole flock of geese crowded around the front door. I threw a stick at them to drive them away, and the stick broke the leg of this goose. That is the bird that I am cooking now."

"Well, that is good. Cook it well and bring it to me down in the south field where I shall be plowing."

"All right," said the woman.

It happened that the field that was being plowed by the hoca was right next to the field that the husband was plowing. The woman was afraid that she would not be able to distinguish between her husband and her lover when

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she went to deliver the goose. So she sent a servant to the hoca to ask him how she was to identify him from a distance. The hoca sent back the message: "One of my oxen is white; you can tell which is my team from that." But the clever son overheard this before he went to join his father in the field.

The father and son were plowing in their field, and when it was noon, they decided to rest. While they were resting, the clever son covered one of his father's oxen with a white sheet. From a distance the husband's team looked just like that of the hoca, and so when the woman started to the fields with the goose, she could not tell which was which. "The hoca's must be that one over there," she said to herself, but when she reached that place, she discovered that it was the team of her husband. It was too late to change her direction now, for the husband and the son had seen her coming.

"What do you want?" called the husband.

"Well," she said, "I have brought the goose." There was nothing else that she could do but give it to her husband and son. While they were eating the goose, however, she said to them, "You should be ashamed of yourselves. You never think of your neighbors. Look at that poor hoca who has been plowing in the next field all day. Shouldn't you give some goose to him too? When you die, the very first question that will be put to you as you lie on the funeral altar* will be whether or not you were considerate to your neighbors. Is it right that you should be eating goose while that poor hoca is not having any of it?"

Angels -- Questioning -- interrogate corpse shortly after death

*NOTE: Burial ceremonies begin at a mosque, before which are several raised marble slabs. On these slabs the coffins of the deceased are placed and part of the funeral ritual is enacted there. During the half hour or so that the confined corpse rests there, it is believed that he is questioned closely about his past life by a host of spiritual inquisitors. Most of the questions concern the deceased's faithfulness to the commands of the Koran.

"Well, what shall we do?" asked the husband.

"Go and invite him to join you in your meal," said the wife

The son was sent to invite the hoca to come and join the meal, but when the clever boy reached the hoca, he said to him, "Oh, Uncle Hoca, my father has heard of your visits to my mother, and he is going to kill you."

Hearing this, the hoca was quite frightened, and he prepared to run away. The clever son returned and told his father that the hoca had refused to come and join them in their meal. Upon this, the husband said to his wife, "Apparently our son has not been able to explain the invitation clearly to the hoca. Why don't you go and invite him yourself?"

The wife was gone for a long time, and finally the man asked his son, "What do you suppose is keeping your mother?"

Disgusted by his father's stupidity, the clever son said, "Oh, she has probably gone to the police station to make a report about you, because she has heard that you were having a love affair with a donkey."

The husband was frightened at this news and he asked, "Oh, son, where should I hide from the police?"

"There is a cave over at the edge of the field. Why don't you go and hide yourself in it?"

The man went and hid in the cave, and while he was there, two hunters came along. When the clever son saw them, he shouted, "Come here, oh, my Hunter Uncle!"

The hunters came to the place where the boy was standing and asked him "What is the matter?"

"A male fox just ran into that cave at the edge of the field," he said "Why don't you drive it out and shoot it?"

fox

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Five -- at mouth
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To drive the fox from its hiding place the hunters built a large
at the mouth of the cave. Smoke poured into the cave, and after a whi
the man could stand it no longer. He came out gasping for fresh air, and
when he saw the two men with guns, he shouted at them, "What if I did have
a love affair with a donkey? It was my own donkey--so what is that to you
Saying this he returned to his house and left the two hunters standing speech-
less with amazemen