

story #52 (Tape 52)
1961-1962

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#52 Guessing brothers -- three #52
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The Three Guessing Brothers and the Köse

#52 Guessing Children -- three #52 Three Guessing Children
There were once three brothers who had a donkey. One day when they

came home from the town, they discovered that their donkey was missing. It was not where they had left it.

The eldest brother examined the ground carefully and said, "The man who stole our donkey had short legs."

"If he had short legs," said the middle brother, "then he must have been beardless."

"If he has short legs and is beardless," said the youngest brother, then his name must be Musa."

In this same village there was a köse named Musa. The three brothers went to him and said, "Uncle Musa, give our donkey back to us."

"Why do you think that I have your donkey?" the köse asked.

"Well, we have thought about this matter," said the eldest, "and we have concluded that it was you who took our donkey."

The köse denied having the donkey, and he asked them to take their case to court if they thought that they had any claim against him. They went to the kad^{of law}, and he set a date for the hearing. ^{legal}

At the hearing, the kad said to the three brothers, "Have you any witness to prove that Musa stole your donkey?"

"No, but we guessed that it must have been he who stole it," said the eldest brother. "We are sure that we are right."

¹ Although the köse is a physical type, he is not always short, as he is so often described in folk tales. The name Musa is frequently given to the köse, not because that is a real name but because it echoes the sound of köse. Euphony of vowels is indigenous to the Turkish language, certain prescribed vowels always following certain other vowels. This similarity of sounds between köse and Musa is thus more appreciated by a Turkish audience than by an English one.

The kad! thought about this for a minute, and then he said to the brothers, "Go out of the room for a few minutes and then come back again." While they were gone, he took an orange from a bowl and put it into his pocket.

When the brothers came back into the room, the kad! said to them, "Can you guess what I have in my pocket?"

The eldest brother said, "The thing that you have in your pocket is round."

"If it is round," said the middle brother, "then it is yellow."

"If it is round and if it is yellow," said the youngest, "then it must be an orange."

The kad! then turned to Musa and said, "Produce the donkey!"

"It is home in my stable," said the kóse, and the case was closed.