

Story #92 (Tape 20?)-

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The Hoca's Disappearing Goose

Once there was and once there wasn't, when God's creatures were many, and it was a sin to talk too much, then there was a hoca that taught in a district school. One day he felt like having a goose to eat. He called one of the students and said, "Buy me a goose and take it to my wife and tell her to make it ready for tonight. I want to have it so much that I am not going to have any lunch today."

Unfaithfulness

So the boy went, bought a goose for the hoca, and took it to his home and told the wife, "Hoca wants to have this goose for tonight. He wanted it so much that he wasn't going to have any lunch for today, so that he would have full appetite."

"All right," said the wife and she plucked the goose and roasted it. Then she made some pilav for the goose to rest on. She got the goose ready and put it aside. Just then her sweetheart came to the house.

"What is it?" he said

"I cooked a goose for the hoca," she said. "He wanted to have it for dinner."

"Well, I am going to have it, instead," said the sweetheart.

"No, you cannot," said the wife.

But he said, "Let him eat whatever he finds. I want to eat the goose."

So they set the table and they put the goose and pilav and yoghurt and everything else on the table, and they ate until they had finished it to the very end. They threw the bones away, and it was as if the goose had never existed in that house.

After school was out, the hoca came home with his stick in his hand, and said, "Wife, bring me the goose. I want to eat my goose."

She said, "What goose?"

"What do you mean, 'What goose?' " said the hoca. "I sent a goose home for you to cook. Haven't you cooked it?"

"No, no. I didn't cook the goose," she said.

["And the hoca, that dog, cannot even guess it from the smell in the house," the storyteller said.]

"If you sent a goose home, why shouldn't I cook it?" said his wife.

"All right," said the hoca. "Bring us some bread and cheese." So they ate that, and they went to sleep at night.

In the morning the hoca went to school and said, "O, Mehmet--you, Mehmet! What did you do with the goose yesterday?"

"I took it to your house, teacher," said Mehmet.

"How do you mean, you took it to my house? You are lying. My wife does not lie. Lie down," he said, "and lift your feet." He had Mehmet's feet tied together for the beating of his soles.¹ Mehmet had so much of a beating that his soles became sore, and he cried and he cried. The hoca then said, "Ahmet, you come here. Take this money and go to the market. Buy a goose and take it to my wife and tell her to cook it for tonight."

Ahmet bought the goose and took it to the hoca's house and said, "The hoca wants to eat goose for two days. Don't you say that I didn't bring it to you."

"How can I say that you did not bring it? If you bring it I shall say that you did. But how can I say you did if you did not bring it to me?" said the wife. She cooked the goose and she made some pilav and put the goose on it, and there came her sweetheart again.

¹In Eastern countries punishment is frequently inflicted by beating the soles of the feet. This was, until recent times, a common practice in some Turkish schools.

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"What have you been doing?" said the man.

"The hoca has been wanting a goose, and I made some yesterday but he couldn't have it. I am making some today so that he will have it."

"Let him eat your father's mustache," he said.

So they sat down again and they finished the goose and the pilav and all. They cleared up the table and threw away the bones. The poor hoca had been almost dead of hunger for two days now. He came home dragging himself along underfed. "All right, wife. Bring the goose along. Let us have it!"

"Which goose! Have you gone mad?" said the woman. "You have been talking about the goose for two days."

"Well, where is the goose that I sent you today?"

"You did not send me any goose today," said his wife. "Why should I tell you that you did not if you had sent me a goose?"

"Oh, all right," said the hoca. So they ate whatever they had in the house, and after a while they went to sleep.

The next day the hoca went to the school and he called, "Ahmet, what did you do with the goose?"

"I took it to your home."

"Oh, no, you did not take it home. My wife does not lie. Lie down and lift up your feet." And he got his falaka,² and his soles became all swollen. Then the hoca called, "Hasan, come over here! Go and buy a goose and take it to my wife and tell her to cook it for me for tonight."

Hasan said, "All right." He went and bought the goose, and he came back to the school and poked it on the top of a stick. Then he called all

² The falaka is a wooden frame with straps used to yoke the feet together so that the soles may both be beaten with the same blow.

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of his friends and they all began to sing:

Let the hoca's goose be greasy;
Let the hoca's goose be greasy;
Let the hoca's goose be greasy.

They sang this song all the way along until they came to the hoca's house. They knocked at the door, and the hoca's wife opened it. ["That wife! She would be better not to be!" the storyteller said at this point.] The boys said, "Here, sister, we brought you the hoca's goose. And the whole school knows that we did bring it!"

"What sort of talk is that? she said. "If you bring it, of course I shall say that you brought it." She plucked the goose and roasted it, and she made pilav, and put the goose on top. When she had everything ready, she covered the top, and there came her sweetheart again.

"What have you got?"

"A goose," she said, "but you are not going to eat this goose because the hoca is going to eat it."

"No, I am going to eat it!"

you will not!"

"If you do not let me eat the goose," said her lover, "I am going to kill you!"

right," said the woman. "At least hide yourself somewhere and let the hoca see the goose just once."

The sweetheart hid himself, and in the evening after school was out, the hoca came home, all hungry, and said, "Bring us the goose! Let us have the goose!"

"Yes," she said.

"Here is the goose, all ready." Then she brought the goose and opened the lid, and it was steaming hot

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"Oh, good!" said the hoca.

But the woman said, "All the taste comes from the pepper and the spices that I need. You run to the store and get me some pepper and other spices, and then it will be fixed for you."

So the hoca started to the store. In the meantime, his wife saw a poor man coming along and she said, "I have cooked a goose for the hoca, but the hoca does not enjoy eating alone. You come and eat it with him."

So the man came and sat by the stove. While the hoca was still out, she melted some oil and brought the handle of a pestle and stuck it in the hot oil and then stuck it into pepper and then stuck it into hot oil and then stuck it in the pepper again. The man said, "What are you doing that?"

"Oh," said the woman, "hoca will share the goose with you, but on one condition. He must first shave your chin with this pestle."³

"Oh, no!" said the man. "I do not want any goose then."

"Oh, yes, you do!" said the woman.

"Oh, no, I don't! And you won't touch my chin with that hot pestle. Don't touch it!"

So the man started running away, saying, "Don't touch it! Don't touch

He meant that he did not want to be touched with that hot pestle.

The woman ran after him, and they saw the hoca coming down the street from the store. The hoca asked, "What is all the trouble?" And all this time the man was running away from them.

³This tale was told in mixed company among whom was an American woman. As the collector inferred (and later corroborated), the ending was bowdlerized; the wife threatened to do something else, indecent, with the pestle.

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The woman said, "Oh, that poor man came and took the goose and he won't even let me touch its sauce. He won't even let me dip my bread into the sauce, he keeps on saying, 'Don't touch it Don't touch it!' And, truly enough, the man was screaming at a distance, "Don't touch it! Don't touch it!" all the time, but he meant something besides what the hoca's wife had told her husband.

During this time the sweetheart, inside the house, had gotten into the room and grabbed the goose and had run away with it. The hoca thought the poor man had run away with the goose. As he was really a very shabbily dressed man, the hoca said, "Oh, it is all right. He is a poor man. Let him go with it, with the blessing of Allah.

So the woman's problem was solved. The hoca did not have his goose, and she did not have to explain what happened. And the sweetheart did have his goose.