

Story #106 (Tape #

1961-1962)

Narrator: Hacı Mehmet Deniz

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Black Mustafa of Karaman

Once there was a very poor young man who lived in a village. He was so poor he had nothing to eat. One day he stopped by some (shepherds) who gave him some (milk) and (yoğurt). While he was eating the milk and yoğurt given him by the shepherds, there were, as usual in places where there are flocks of sheep, (flies) buzzing about. He made a pass with his hand at the flies and caught sixty of them and slammed them against his leg and killed all sixty and then seventy with the other hand. He went to the blacksmith and had made a huge (sword) that said on its blade,

"Black Mustafa of Karaman, killer of sixty in a  
blow of one hand and seventy with a blow of the  
other."

Afterwards, he asked a man what it said, and the man read to him,  
"Black Mustafa of Karaman, killer of sixty in a blow of one hand and  
seventy with a blow of the other." He took the sword and went to the  
mountain and fell asleep with the sword beside him.

Seven (giants) came, and when they read what was written on the  
sword, one said, "Well, we are only seven. If he can kill seventy in  
one blow, we could do nothing against him. He could kill us easily."

Another of the giants called to him, "Oh, young man, young man!"  
but the young man continued to sleep. The giant then poked him with  
his finger, and this time Black Mustafa rose and grabbed his sword.

"What is the matter?" he said.

"Please, young man, do not get excited. We should like to have you as our guest in our house." The seven giants took Black Mustafa to their house, killed a sheep for him, and offered him various delicacies.

He stayed for two days at the house of the giants as their guest and then Black Mustafa began to dig up the ground with a needle. When the giants asked him what he was doing, he said, "I am digging up a canal, and with the water I shall get, I am going to flood all this land, including your house."

Very frightened at what Black Mustafa might do, they begged him to change his mind, and finally Black Mustafa relented and said, "Very well, I shall not do this, then."

The next day, the giants were going to cut wood in the forest. Black Mustafa said, "I shall come with you." Taking a rope 100 meters long, he went along with the giants and tied many pine trees together with it.

"What are you going to do, Black Mustafa?" one of the giants asked.

"I am going to lift up all these pine trees and put them down on your village. Then I shall set them afire and thus burn everything there."

"Please do not do it! You are such a good man that we are sure you would not do such a cruel thing to us." After much imploring on the part of the giants, Black Mustafa agreed not to burn up their village in this way. But the giants decided among themselves to get rid of Black Mustafa somehow, for they were afraid of him. They concluded that there was no security for them as long as he lived.

Black Mustafa discovered that the giants intended to kill him. He hid himself in a closet. He was watching through the knothole the bed in which he had put a trunk of pine tree, with one end on the pillow

and covered with blankets, to make it look as if he were sleeping there. About midnight the seven giants came with axes in their hands and started hacking away at the bed: Çat, pat! Çat, pat! [onomatopoeia for sound of chopping]. The giants chopped the trunk into tiny pieces.

Black Mustafa came out of the closet in the morning, put the chips of wood in the fireplace, lighted a pleasant fire, and began to warm his feet with it. The giants wondered in the morning whether they had been able to do a good job of getting rid of Black Mustafa and so they went to the cottage where he lived and entered his room. They were amazed to see that they had not harmed him a bit. Black Mustafa said to them, "You have a lot of fleas in this house. They bothered me a good deal last night."

The giants were speechless with amazement. "What sort of man would think axe bites were flea bites?" "What strength this man has!" they remarked to each other.

One of the giants was lame. The others put a saddlebag of gold and Black Mustafa on his back and told him to take Black Mustafa to wherever his village was. After going a long way, they reached the cave in which Black Mustafa had been living. Black Mustafa said, "This is my village."

The lame giant, after leaving Black Mustafa, walked away for about 100 meters, but there he decided that he might perhaps eat Black Mustafa and his mother. Black Mustafa sensed that the giant was up to something. He drew his knife, ran toward the lame giant, and shouted at him, "Are you still here, you cuckold?"

When the giant heard this threatening voice, he ran away, and there ends our tale.