

Story #110 (Tape 19,
1961-1962)

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Nasreddin Hoca's Prayer Punishes a Thief

A thief stole a number of things that Nasreddin Hoca kept on his roof. He would come to the Hoca's house late at night, when everyone was in bed, and climb up on the roof and take whatever he could find.

One night Hoca decided to stay awake and catch the thief. He waited until he heard someone on his roof, and then he went outside quietly and took away the ladder that stood against the house. Then he went inside to the bedroom and woke up his wife.

"Why do you waken me in the middle of the night, Hoca?" she asked.

"I want to teach you a special prayer," said Hoca. His wife protested, but the Hoca proceeded to teach her a special prayer. I do not know what prayer it was.

After his wife had learned the prayer, she asked Hoca, "Why do you bother me to learn this particular prayer in the middle of the night? What about it is so valuable? What is it useful for?"

"It is a very powerful prayer that contains magic. If you say it three times, you can jump from a mountain top and not be harmed by the fall."

The thief trapped on the roof heard this through the chimney. He immediately repeated the prayer three times and jumped from the roof. He hit the ground with a terrible crash in front of Hoca's house. Hoca and his wife both ran outside to see what had happened. They found the thief not quite dead but badly injured. The thief said to Hoca, "As long as you have that prayer and I have this stupid head, there is no future for me!"