

Story #112 (Tape #23, 1961-1962)

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Location: Değirmendere village, kaza of Silifke, Province of Içel

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How Koroğlu Got His Name

Tamerlane asked for a pair of horses from Koroğlu. Koroğlu went to the pasture and had gathered his drove of horses and took them to the fountain to water them. Standing by the side of the fountain with a stick in his hand, while the horses were drinking, he waved the stick in the air. All the horses were frightened away except two. Taking these two horses, Koroğlu went to the tent of Tamerlane. Tamerlane was informed of the arrival of the horses. When he went out and looked at them, he was very disappointed by the look of the horses because they did not look very impressive.

He was expecting to get a pair of very fine horses from Koroğlu. When he did not get them, he ordered his men, "Have this man's eyes pulled out and let him go where he will." They took him and blinded his eyes and set him free. With his son, who was with him, he left, and they rode on the two horses rejected by Tamerlane.

On the way, Koroğlu bought two lambs. When they reached home, he had the lambs and the horses tied in his field. After feeding them for forty days, he had one of the lambs killed. He asked his son to examine the bones of the lamb and see whether the marrow was white or black. The son examined the bones and said, "No, father, the marrow is not yet black."

"All right, then. Feed the other lamb for another forty days. The

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aid to his son, "All right, then, feed the horses for another forty days." The son did this. After the forty days had passed, the father had the field watered for four days. "Now get on one and make a run and see if it can reach dry earth with its hooves," he said. At the first attempt, no dry earth appeared in the hooves of either horse.

He then said to his son, "Feed the horses for still another forty days." This time after the same experiment was carried out, dry earth was found in the horses' hooves. When the blind man was satisfied that his horses were thoroughly matured, he and his son mounted them and headed for Tamerlane's tent to take revenge.

On the way, they were chased by the cavalry force of Tamerlane, but they soon outdistanced them--all but two horses, one black and one bay horse of the cavalry force. These two kept after them and kept shortening the distance between them.

The father asked his son, "Who is following us?"

"All of the horses have been left behind except for two."

"What color are they?" the blind man asked.

"One is black and the other bay," said the son.

After running a few kilometers farther, the blind man asked, "Are they still running behind us?"

"The black horse collapsed, but the bay is following us. The horseman is going to attack us."

The blind man said to his son, "You pull up your reins a little, and when he comes near you, say something unintelligible to him. When

he is trying to puzzle out what you said, you can pull him down in the confusion."

The son did as the father told him, and the enemy horseman was killed. Then the two of them came to Camlibel.

This is why they say the bay horse is the best one to buy.