

Story #127 (Tape #8, Summer 1964)

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Location: Collected at the federal penitentiary at Sinop, but informant was from Hameyli kaza in the province of Gaziantep

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Nasreddin Hoca and the Devil

Once the Hoca was a guest in the house of the Devil. For dinner that night the Devil had five chickens cooked and served. Before the family started eating, the Devil asked Nasreddin Hoca to divide the chicken. Hoca thought about this. There were the Devil and his wife, two sons and two daughters made six, and the Hoca himself brought the number to seven, and so he wondered how to divide the five chickens.

"Shall I divide them even or odd, Devil efendi?" asked Hoca.

"Divide them odd," said the Devil

"Very well," said Hoca. "The two sons should have one hen. That's an even plus an odd, which makes an odd. The two daughters should have one hen That's an even plus an odd, and that makes an odd. You and your wife should a hen. Again, that is an even plus an odd and ends odd. Two hens will be mine, then, and that also makes an even plus an odd and ends odd."

So, the Hoca ate well even in the house of the Devil. But the Devil did not easily forget how the Hoca had outwitted him, and so he said to himself, "How can I get the better of this Hoca?"

One day soon after that the Hoca was going somewhere, walking alongside his donkey on the road. The Devil, disguised as a woman, walked behind Hoca and finally caught up with him.

"Selâminaleyküm, Hoca," said the Devil in a woman's voice

"Aleykümselâm," replied Hoca.

"Where are you going, Hoca?" she asked.

"To town. Where are you going, sister?"

"I am going to town, too--to get a few things for the children. May I walk along with you?"

"Of course," said Hoca. He was soon surprised, however, to have the woman nudge him. He paid no attention, but after a while the woman nudged him again. He was puzzled and asked, "What do you want?"

"Well, you know."

"No, I don't know," said Hoca.

"Well, wouldn't you like to lie with me?"

"That sort of thing does not go along well with men of our profession."

"Never mind that," said the woman. "Let us stop here in this wooded place and enjoy ourselves."

Well, they did that. Afterwards the Devil, still disguised as a woman, started dancing around and snapping her fingers as she danced. The Hoca asked her what she meant by this.

Turning back to his normal form, the Devil said, "Well, there was only one person in the whole world that I had not outwitted, and that was Nasreddin Hoca. Now I have outwitted him too. That's why I am so happy."

Well, upon hearing this, the Hoca jumped up, waving his trousers in one hand and dancing also. The Devil did not know what to make of this, and so he said, "Well, I am dancing because I outwitted you, but why are you dancing?"

The Hoca answered, "Well, I had screwed everyone in the whole world but the Devil, and now I have accomplished even that. That's why I'm dancing."