

Story # 170 (Tape #2, Summer 1970) Narrator: Mehmet Saim Bilge, 14
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"Have You Seen My Donkey?"

One day when Nasreddin Hoca was going toward the city with his donkey, he saw a streetcar to which he tied the donkey, thinking it was a house. As he had heard the ezan being chanted, he wanted to take ablutions at a nearby fountain. But when he returned later for the donkey to go to the mosque for prayers, he found that neither the house nor the donkey was there. Then he started walking, deep in thought. A man who came along noticed this mood of the Hoca and asked him, "Why are you thinking so deeply, Hoca?"

"Well, I tied my donkey to a house over there, while I took my ablutions, but when I returned, there was neither house nor donkey to be seen."

The man said, "The thing to which you tied your donkey was a streetcar, not a house, and when it moved, your donkey moved with it."

The Hoca walked on until he came to a hotel, and there he asked for a room. He said to the hotel manager, "I shall go out in search of my donkey, but I shall come back, whether I find it or not, to sleep here."

There was only one vacant room in the hotel, and the Hoca was given this room. When he returned in the evening, without having found his

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donkey, he went to his room and wanted to go to bed. He wondered whether he should sleep under the bed or upon the bed. He thought that if he slept on top of the bed he might be cold, and so he decided to sleep beneath it where, he thought, he would be warmer. He was so tired and so occupied with thoughts of his donkey that he went to bed without turning off the light.

Some time later that night a husband and wife came to the hotel asking for a room. The manager told them that there were no rooms vacant, but just to be sure, they went upstairs to see if there might possibly be a room empty. They saw the room with the light on and no one in the bed, and so they concluded that it was unoccupied. The manager gave that room to the couple.

When the couple went to bed, the husband said to his wife, "Your eyes are so blue! Did you ever see the sea?"

The Hoca, beneath the bed, thought that he was being addressed, and he answered, "Did you ever see my donkey?"