

Story #209 (Tape #6, Summer 1970)

Narrator: Hacı Gönen, 66, gentleman  
farmer

Location: Yukarı Kise Köy  
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Two (Köses) Against One and the Oft-Stolen Butter

The three köses looked exactly alike in every way. If their clothes had not been different, even their families would not have been able to distinguish among them. Whatever they did, they did together, and they had decided to spend their lives in this way till they died, but they decided that they would not reveal their secrets to anyone.

One day one of these köses said to his wife, "Woman, I am going to the mill this morning. The two köses will come to me. Do not let them feel I am not in. Treat them just as well as you would if I were at home." It was after ten o'clock. He loaded his donkey and went to the mill.

The other two köses went to his house, just before evening. They knocked at the door. The wife came and said, "Who is it?"

"Where has Uncle Köse gone?" they asked. When they found he had gone to the mill, they wanted to turn back, but the köse's wife said, "The köse may have gone, but his home is here. Come in!"

They entered. She showed them hospitality, and offered them things--tea and coffee--and asked if they were hungry and would like to eat.

"No, we do not want to eat."

Soon evening set in, and they said, "We should leave, since the köse will probably not come." They got up, and before they went out the front door they started an argument between themselves. "This place and that. This happened

and that happened. You did not know it and you could not find it." Thus they pretended to fight with one another. Now, there was a pot of butter behind the door, weighing ten kilos. It was this pot of butter they were after, and in the confusion they took it. They were so skilled in stealing that they could steal one's lungs in broad daylight.

The köse's wife said "goodbye," and they left. When they were gone, half an hour later, the köse returned from the mill. He knocked tak tak on the door.

"Who is it?" his wife asked.

"I am back. Let us unload the donkey."

The wife went out to help, and the two unharnessed the donkey

"Well, what happened?" he asked. "Did the köses come?"

"Yes, they did."

"Did you treat them well?"

I did."

"You did not let them steal anything, did you?"

"When they were leaving, they caused a stir in the lobby."

"I hope you did not let the butter be stolen. Did you?"

"I do not think so

"Go and find out."

She went and looked, and returned to report, "The pot is gone."

"You cursed woman! Take the donkey to the stable. I shall go after them."

He went after them

The two köses had covered the distance of half an hour's walk by then, but the single köse caught up with them. He saw them at some distance from their village and decided to watch what they would do.

One of the two köses said to the other, "I must urinate. Let me take my time here. You carry the butter to your home."

Story #209

"All right. I will," said the other.

The third köse [single köse] passed this one who was left behind. This third köse, who had heard the conversation between the two, went to the one with the pot of butter and said, "Well, I have urinated and have come back. Now let me carry the pot of butter." He took the pot of butter and turned back.

The köse who had stayed behind to urinate had now come back and he met the second köse and said, "You must be tired. Let me carry the butter."

"What butter? You have already taken it, have you not?"

"Do not say it, you God-damned köse. You let the butter be stolen by the third köse."

The köses started running and reached the third köse's house before he did. The door was unlocked, and they just walked in. When the third köse reached home, he knocked tak tak, believing it was locked. The köse behind the door opened the door for him, and he asked, "Did you put up the donkey in the stable as I told you?"

I did not. Did you not take the donkey to the stable?" asked one of the two köses in the other's wife's voice.

The third köse answered, "No. Did you not?"

"No

The third köse said, "You God-damned woman [literally, let-me-fuck-her-vagina woman], take this pot of butter." While he searched for the donkey, the others, the first two köses, took the butter and left. They walked and walked and reached their own village and entered their house there.

The other köse searched the entire village for his donkey, but he could not find it. "Woman!" he shouted to his wife, who was just up from sleep.

is the matter?" she asked

"I could not find the donkey anywhere.

"What donkey are you talking about, man?"

"Well, did you not tell me the donkey was missing when I brought back the butter?"

"Man, I put the donkey in the stable. You are confused

"You God-damned köses!" the third köse said. "You have stolen the butter again! I shall go after them again. He started running, and reached the village where they lived. They were hiding in their house, talking about sharing the butter.

"You cannot measure this butter properly without scales [a pair of balance scales]," the one said. "While I watch the butter, you go and find a pair of scales."

The köse who owned the butter had been listening to them secretly. When the one who was supposed to find scales had been gone half an hour, he [the single köse] came and said, "I could find no scales. Everyone has gone to bed."

"What do you mean? When did they go to bed?"

"If you do not believe it, go and search for scales yourself."

When the köse went out to search for a pair of scales, the third köse [the single köse] took the pot of butter and went home.

Later, when the first köse had returned with the scales, he saw that his fellow köse was not there. "What kind of business is this?" he exclaimed

Soon the first köse returned with a pair of scales. "What is going on here?" he asked.

"Did you not say that you could not find a pair of scales because everyone in the village had gone to bed?"

They realized now that they could not solve this problem and so they gave it up completely.