

Story #248 (Tape #7, Summer 1970)

Narrator: Hacı Gönen

Location: Yukarı Kise Köy, Güvem nahiye, Kızılcahamam, Ankara Province

Date: July 1970

The Blacksmith Plucks a [?]Goose

I remember something like this tale. The padişah of that time took one of his viziers with him and went on a tour of the city of Istanbul in disguise. They saw that a blacksmith was working in his shop at about 11 P.M. He was beating something tangur, tungur, tangur, tungur.

The padişah shouted, "Blacksmith!"

The blacksmith shouted back, "Yes, your majesty."

The padişah asked, "What did you do with 12?"

İngilizce yazı

The blacksmith answered, "I raised 12 to 24, but could not make it enough for 32."

The padişah said, "You should have gotten married."

The blacksmith answered, "I got up early, but others were served by it."

The padişah said, "If I send you a goose, could you pluck its feather?"

The blacksmith said, "I could do a very good job of it."

The padişah and the vizier left the place. When they were about 50 paces away, the padişah said, "Oh, vizier, tell me what we talked about with that man a short while ago. Are you aware of what was going on?"

"No, I am not."

The padişah said, "You do not say so! Your neck should be chopped through for that. The blacksmith understood my meaning [question] from my mentioning 12, and he replied correctly. And now you say you understood nothing of this conversation."

"Yes, your majesty. You can cut off my head."

"Go and learn from ^{him}," said the padişah.

The vizier went to the blacksmith and said, "Blacksmith, rest from your work a moment. A few minutes ago you had a conversation with the padişah."

"What?"

"Well, you talked about something, did you not?"

"Were you not here when we talked?"

"Yes, I was, but I could not understand what you said. Do me a kindness and tell me what you meant by that talk."

"Can you pay me for it?"

The vizier said, "What do you want?"

The blacksmith said, "I leave it to you."

"I shall give you 500, 100, 1500," said the vizier.

"That is enough," said the blacksmith. He then explained to the vizier the meaning of his talk as follows. "The padişah asked me, 'Blacksmith, what did you do with the 12?' With that, he meant, 'What did you do with your 12 hours of daytime?' I said, 'I work 12 by day and 12 by night, and this made 24 hours per day, but could not make enough to provide for the 32 teeth.'"

The vizier asked, "What did it mean when he said, 'You should have married' and your answer, 'I did, but others were served by it'?"

The blacksmith said, "I meant I had all female children and I have given them away."

The vizier said, "He then asked you whether you could pluck the feather of a goose he would send. What did he mean by that?"

The blacksmith answered, "Would there be a better goose than you? Now go away."

Right then, I was there, and I saw the sad expression on the face of the vizier when he was leaving.