Once upon a time there was a certain Köfeci Mehmet in Istanbul. He made baskets and sold them. He had a neighbor by the name of Ali Riza Bey living opposite his house. Ali Riza Bey had a beautiful daughter. Mehmet the basketmaker fell in love with this girl and wanted to marry her. He was being consumed with the love of this girl, and he was getting thinner and thinner. One day his mother noticed his condition and asked, "What is the matter with you, son? Why are you getting so thin?"

"Oh, mother, how shall I explain my problem to you?" said Mehmet.

"The man who reveals his problem crosses the mountains while the man who hides his problem loses his way. Let me know what has been bothering you," said the mother.

"What is the use of telling? It is something hopeless." said the son. He then added, "I fell in love with the daughter of Ali Riza Bey!"

*Köfeci - basketmaker.
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"What a thing to do! We are only basketmakers. He is an important man. How can I go ask the hand of his daughter you?" Although she said so, she could not help going and asking Ali Riza Bey to give his daughter to her son.

Ali Riza Bey said, "You send him to me one night and let me have a talk with him. If it is his kismet, he will have her." Köfeci Mehmet went to Ali Riza Bey's house. "Son, I am now going to give you a task. Do not worry about your problem. If it is your kismet, you will get it. I shall pay you your travel expenses. You will go to Mardin, where a man opened a large restaurant, which he has been running for seven years without getting 10 paras from any customer. He has a house of his own and many apprentices. His men just "goodbye" to customers departing after eating. He ran this restaurant for seven years without charging anyone anything. I would like you to go and find out the reason why this man behaves in this way. Then you will be my son-in-law, Inshallah."

The young man went to Mardin and found the restaurant in question. He sat down at a table. A waiter came and asked

"What are you going to have?"

He said he would like to have pilav, dessert, this and that. After eating, he was seen off in the usual way. Before he left he asked, "Where is your master?"

They pointed out, "He is sitting behind that door.

The young man went to him and said, "I hear you have been running this restaurant for seven years, and not getting any money. Would you please explain to me the reason why you have
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been doing this?"

The man said, "You have had your meal. Move on! You cannot be told about this thing." The young man then implored the restaurant owner that he answer his question. The restaurant owner asked him, "Where are you from?"

"I am from Istanbul," said he.

"Well, you really come from a far place. You now go to Mersin. There is Mustafa Ağa the Sword Maker there, who makes three swords a day. He sells two and throws the third one into the sea. You go and find out why he throws a sword into the sea everyday, and then I shall tell you why I run this restaurant this way."

The man left Mardin and went to Mersin, and asking his way around he found the shop of Mustafa Ağa the Sword Maker. Slowly he said, "Selâmûnaleykûm."

Mustafa Ağa said, "Aleykûmselâm."

"Father, I went from Istanbul to Mardin, where there is a restaurant. They sent me from there to see you in Mersin. Why do you make three swords a day and throw one into the sea every day? Tell me the reason why," requested the man.

"No, you cannot be told that," said the sword maker. The man begged very much and finally the sword maker said, "Son, since you have come all this way, I shall tell you the reason why. Son, the Great War broke out in such-and-such a year. Everybody was called for military service, including those whose birth dates were irregular. I was called too, although my birthdate did not fit in. I served 12 to 13 years and then
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returned home. My wife was pregnant when I had gone for military service. When I returned I found my wife sleeping with a young man in a bed. I first thought that he might be her lover, so I drew my sword and made up my mind to kill them. I killed both of them and then I came to a coffee house which was about to be closed as it was pretty late. All of a sudden people started shouting, 'The wife and son of Mustafa Aga the Sword Maker were both killed!' When I heard this, I was in a terrible state. I almost committed suicide. I was caught. I realized that I had killed my own wife and son. I had committed this act for being impatient. Now I make three swords and sacrifice one sword for them.'

when the man got this answer from him he went to the restaurant owner. The restaurant owner told him, "Son, I went for my military service, and when I returned, I had nothing to do. My wife had two beshibirliks [gold coins] round her neck. I took one of these and spent it on vegetables and groceries and started a restaurant business. When I opened the door of my restaurant with bismillah in the morning, a Dervish Baba appeared. I asked him "what will you have, Baba?" He said, 'Have you got this? Have you got that?' I served him what he asked for, and he swallowed up whatever I put before him. He then asked the food to be brought with the pot and all. I did what he asked and he ate up everything and said, 'Huu!' when going out of the door. He left without paying ten paras. That day I closed the restaurant and went home. My wife asked me, 'what did you earn today?' I
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explained to her, 'I sold everything on credit today. I hope everything will turn out well in the end.' I begged to give me the other beshibirlik too.' I spent this gold coin on groceries too. I had food cooked. The same Dervish Baba came back the next morning and sat down and ordered, 'Bring me this, bring me that.' He ate up everything and then said 'Huu!' and went out of the door. In the evening I went home and my wife asked me how much I had earned. 'You spent two beshibirliks. Didn't you earn anything in return?' I explained to her, 'Woman, let us be patient; everything will out well in the end.' There was one more coin round her neck, which I took. I had it turned into money at the broker. I bought vegetables, this and that, rice, meat and so forth. Food was cooked again. The Dervish Baba came and ate up everything again. He was about to leave the restaurant without paying anything. He had just said 'Huu!' This time I could not help interfering. I said, 'Look here, friend. The grocer won't give me any vegetables with 'Huu!'; the butcher won't give me any meat with 'Huu!' either. This is the third time you have eaten without paying. The knife has now reached bone [i.e., I can't allow it any more]. 'What do you want from me?' 'Well, I want you to pay for the food that you have eaten. 'Follow me,' said the Dervish Baba. He kicked the bottom of a bush and a stairway appeared. We went down five or ten steps. There were seven sackfuls of yellow liras. He said, 'These are yours. Take them and do what you would like with them.' I filled my pockets with gold. I
could not possibly carry the seven sackfuls of gold. While looking around, the Dervish Baba vanished. The seven sackfuls of gold had reached home before I had. I have been spending the gold in only one of them for all these seven years and I have not yet been able to finish them. This is the reason. The Dervish had told me, 'Take some of this money and rub it against the eyes of a blind cobbler living at such and such a place.' I found the blind cobbler repairing shoes at a corner of a street. Passersby dropped coins on a cloth spread before him. I rubbed the blind cobbler's eyes with the gold produced by the Dervish Baba, and his eyes were opened. I was able to see again. I asked the cobbler how he could explain this. He then explained as follows, 'Once a Dervish Baba asked me to repair his shoes. He had very large shoes. I repaired them. He put them on and was leaving without paying. When I demanded money, he struck me, and I was blind. He struck me again and I recovered my sight. The cobbler ran after him and caught him. He said to the Dervish Baba, 'The man I bought the hide from wants money. The man I bought the nails from is expecting money. Besides, I am hungry. You ought to pay me.' The Dervish Baba struck him again and the cobbler again went blind. His eyes were now opened because the money was the Dervish Baba's.'

After getting this information the young man came back to Ali Riza Bey and told him what had happened. He then married Ali Riza Bey's daughter and had a wedding which lasted forty days and forty nights. In fact, I happened to be there
too, and I ate of their wedding pilâv. Orada masal burada sakal.

[The narrator added that he heard this tale some fifty-five years ago. When I asked why Ali Riza Bey sent the basket-maker after these tasks described in the tale, the narrator said, "As he was a simple basket-maker, he would thus see the world and gain experience before he married his daughter."