

Narrator

Location

Date

Hizir teaches that Everyone Reveals His Own Origins

hoca

f y days,

olisi

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She asked, "Don't you know that the padishah can behead you for such a thing? What a foolish thing to do!"

"Well, let us leave it to Allah," said the hoca. "When the time comes, we may be able to find a way out of this."

Thirty-eight days passed quickly, and then the thirty-ninth, and finally the fortieth day arrived without any sign of Hızır. As the food had been dwindling away, the hoca had begun to worry more and more. On the fortieth day there came a knock on the door, and when they looked out, they saw that two horses had arrived. Whoever had brought them had tied them nearby and then left. The hoca mounted one of the horses and led the other one, wondering just what he was to do. When he looked around at the second horse again, he saw to his surprise that a boy had mounted it and was riding along with him. They went straight to the palace and the presence of the padishah

"Your majesty," said the hoca, "I have been unable to discover Hızır."

"Call my Grand Vezir," said the padishah. When the Grand Vezir arrived, the padishah asked him, "What punishment would you recommend for this man?"

"He should be chopped up into tiny pieces of the size used to make keşkek.² Keşkek should then be sold to the people, and thus an example would be made of him."

²Keşkek--boiled wheat in which minced meat is cooked. The wheat becomes glutinous and forms a kind of thick soup.

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When the boy heard this remark, he said, "Everything reveals its own origins."³

Then the padishah called the second vezir to him and asked him, "What should be the punishment for this man?"

"His flesh should be cut into large pieces and hung from hooks," said the second vezir.

Everything reveals its own origins," said the boy again when the third vezir was asked this same question, he responded, "Your majesty, we should forgive him, for hunger may cause even a noble person to go astray.

"Everything reveals its own origins," said the boy for the third time.

"What do you mean by repeating that remark?" demanded the padishah.

"The father of your Grand Vezir was a keşkek maker. His words reveal this. The father of your second vezir was a butcher, and his words testify to this. Your third vezir is the one with the best background. And if you are looking for Hazzir, I am he."⁴

The padishah shouted to the hoca, "Hoca, catch him!"

³The expression used here is "Aslıhu, neslinü," that is, everything reveals its beginnings or origins. This sounds like the Platonic concept that all things aspire toward their origins. This is apparently a standard Turkish expression. Are asıl and nesil Turkish or Arabic words in origin? The inversion suggests that they are loan words.

⁴The last two sentences of Hazzir's speech end in words that produce, in Turkish, a near rhyme. Any artistic use of this tale should provide some approximation in English of this near rhyme.

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"I am responsible only for finding him and bringing him here, not for catching him."

The boy, who was indeed Hızır, just disappeared.

[The tape then contains some comments by Huseyin Kılıç Arslan, school teacher at Akça Bey Köy, explaining the tale.]