

Story #312 (Not on tape)

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Location: Ankara, but narrator came from Istanbul

Date: April 1962

Why Ahmet Earns More Than Mehmet

One day a man went to visit a friend of his. After had talked for a while, the visitor said to his host, "There is one thing that puzzles me about your household. You have servants, Ahmet and Mehmet. They both work for you, and yet you pay Ahmet a hundred liras a month, while you pay Mehmet only fifty liras a month. That doesn't seem quite fair, does it?"

The host smiled. "Yes, it is true that I pay Ahmet twice as much as I pay Mehmet, but I have my reasons. See--I'll show you why."

"Ahmet!" he called.

"Yes, sir!" Ahmet said, and he quickly appeared before his master.

"Ahmet," said his master, "here is some money. Please go to the store down on the next corner and buy me some cigarettes."

"Yes, sir. Right away, sir," said Ahmet, and he took the money his master gave him and went out upon the errand.

"Well," said the host, "now Ahmet is taking off his slippers and putting on his shoes."

A moment later, he said, "Now Ahmet has reached the first

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corner and is going around the corner."

A moment later, he said, "Now Ahmet is going past the bakery."

A moment later, he said, "Now Ahmet is in the store, buying the cigarettes and getting the change."

Then, "Now Ahmet is coming past the bakery

Again, "Now Ahmet is coming inside, to take off his shoes and put on his slippers. Ahmet!" he called

"Yes, sir!" Ahmet answered, and he came into the room wearing his slippers and carrying both the cigarettes and the change, which he gave to his master.

"Thank you, Ahmet. You may go," said his master. And Ahmet left.

"Mehmet!" called the host.

"Yes, sir!" Mehmet said, and he quickly appeared before his master

"Mehmet," said his master, "here is some money. Please go to the store down on the next corner and buy me some cigarettes."

"Yes, sir! Right away, sir!" said Mehmet, and he took the money his master gave him and went upon the errand.

"Well," said the host, "Mehmet should be taking off his slippers and putting on his shoes.

A moment later, he said, "Now Mehmet should have reached the first corner and be going around the corner

A moment later, he said, "Now Mehmet should be going past the bakery."

A moment later, he said, "Now Mehmet should be in the store buying the cigarettes and getting the change.

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Then, "Now Mehmet should be coming past the bakery."

Again, "Now Mehmet should be coming around the corner."

And, "Now Mehmet should be coming inside, to take off his shoes and put on his slippers. Mehmet!" he called

"Yes, sir!" Mehmet said, and he quickly appeared before his master.

"Where are the cigarettes?" asked his master.

"Oh, I haven't the cigarettes. I am just putting on my shoes to go out," answered Mehmet.

"There!" said the host. "Now do you see why I pay Ahmet a hundred liras a month and Mehmet only fifty liras?"