

Story #321 (Tape #5, 1971)

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Behlül Dana's Contempt for Money

Behlül never accepted money from others. Once in a while, Harun Reşid used to offer Behlül some money, but Behlül would always look at the money and refuse to accept it, saying, "You got this money from the poor people who worked hard to provide you with tax payments, and they parted with their money in tears. I cannot accept money obtained in such a fashion."

Since Harun Reşid could not make Behlül accept money, he decided to trick the madman. Behlül had to cross a wooden bridge every day on his way to Baghdad. The caliph thought, "If I ask my men to strew money on the bridge, Behlül will very likely pick up this money."

On the day the caliph's men strewed money on the bridge, Behlül came to the bridge, but before crossing it, he thought, "All my life I have crossed this bridge with my eyes open. Today I'll cross it with my eyes shut, just for a change." Because Behlül had his eyes shut as he crossed the bridge, he could not see the money, and therefore it remained untouched.