Story #357 (Not on tape)

Informants: Children at Ayşe Abila İlkoğulu

Narrator: Neriman Hızır (Ayşe Abila)

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The Hodja and the Candle

One day during a particularly bitter winter, the Hodja and his friends sat in the coffeehouse discussing the weather. Plain talk gave way to boasting, and before long the Hodja puffed out his chest importantly.

"You may think we are having a cold winter. As for me, I thrive on cold and snow. Why, when I was a boy, I used to go out in the middle of January and break the ice on the river so that I could have a good, brisk swim for myself. Pooh! This cold is nothing."

This claim was too exaggerated for the rest of them. Nudging a companion, the Hodja's best friend set out a fine challenge. "I say, Hodja. You like cold weather. I suppose you could stay out all night long in the cold without a coat or a blanket and nothing at all to warm yourself?"

"Of course," bragged the Hodja.

"No fire, no hot tea, no blanket, no coat?" The others seemed impressed.

"Well," said the ringleader, "we'll make a bargain with you. If tonight you can stay outside, with absolutely nothing extra to warm you, all night long, you'll be our guest at a fine dinner. Right, friends?"

"Right!" they chorused,

"On the other hand," the ringleader continued, "if you use any means at all of keeping yourself warm, you will entertain us for dinner. How
must herald a fine meal.

kept me equal to the torments of the cold."

kept excusing himself to go out to the kitchen and supervise the cooking.
not a hint of what was to be served for dinner. what's more, the Hodja
must herald a fine meal. but, snift as they would, they could detect
sparsely furnished living room, waiting for the delightful smells that
The group arrived in good time, and set on bolsters in the Hodja's
house.

on the matter, so they were intrigued that everyone to dinner at the Hodja's
the part of the Hodja was sufficient to move the resolve of his friends
host at dinner, for you warmed yourself by that candle. no protest on


"what?!! exclaim the challenger. "Hodja effendi, you must be our

Keep me equal to the torments of the cold.

a hundred meters away a means! i did see a candle burning, and the glow
no means at all!! the Hodja declared, "unless you can call a candle

All of warming yourselves repeated the challenger.

are you sure you need no means at

chill-vigil.

were amased to find the Hodja calm and smiling, none the worse for his
The next morning the friends, stepping outside into the frosty air,
able to endure the long night.

Hodja felt the blood flow back through his stiffening veins. thus he was
Hodja fell the blood flow back through the stiffening veins. thus he was
perhaps a hundred meters away. Fix the eye on the candle glow, the
just as we were about to concede defeat, he sped a candle set in a window
the c拉丁sky, and repenting a thousand times of his hasty boastful
wen houses as the Hodja strode here and there, studying the tar in
that evenent the Hodja's friends watched through the windows of their

"rufe, rufe, effendi the Hodja."

about that, Hodja's effendi
a most unusual procedure for him. As one hour succeeded another with still no sign of food, the men began to grumble among themselves, and at last the ringleader chaffed the Hodja about the delay.

"Ah, my friends, you can come and see for yourselves that your dinner is being made ready," declared their host, and he led the way to the kitchen. Following him, they were amazed to find a large caldron suspended from the ceiling. A meter below the caldron burned a single candle.

"But, Hodja offendi," spluttered the ringleader, "surely you don't expect to heat that caldron with a candle? Why, the dinner would never get done!"

"Oh, I'm not so sure," answered the Hodja calmly. "If a candle a hundred meters away can keep me warm all night long, surely a candle one meter away can heat a caldron!"