

Story #362 (Not on tape)

Informants: Children at Ayşe Abla İlkokulu

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A Donkey Transformed

One day the ^{NIT} Hodja, desiring to buy an agreeable donkey to set a good example for the bad-tempered one in his own stable, rode to the village market. After carefully examining the donkeys for sale, he chose a mild-mannered little beast with four sturdy legs and, placing a halter around its neck, he led it behind him as he rode his old donkey back home.

Noting that the Hodja was nodding sleepily as he rode, two scamps slipped up to the new donkey. One removed the halter from the donkey's neck and placed it around his own neck; the other quietly led the donkey back to the marketplace, where he obtained a good price for it.

The Hodja awoke as his donkey stopped at the door of his own stable, and turned to survey his new purchase. To his surprise, the agreeable little donkey had disappeared, and in its place was a ragged boy, with the donkey's halter snugly around his neck.

"What's this!" exclaimed the Hodja. "Where is my new donkey?"

The boy hung his head. "I was your new donkey, Hodja effendi. You see, I have always been a stubborn and disobedient boy, and my mother one day became so disgusted with me that she asked Allah to change me into the donkey I must surely be. Suddenly I had four legs and long ears, and a donkey I would have remained if had not been for your kind heart in choosing me today. Thank you so much, Hodja

efendi. Now may I return to my mother?"

Still shaking his head in bewilderment, the Hodja removed the halter from the boy's neck and, cautioning him this time to behave himself, the Hodja sent him home.

Then, since he still needed a new donkey, the Hodja rode back to the marketplace. There, to his surprise, he found the same mild-mannered little donkey waiting to be sold.

Hastily dismounting, the Hodja hurried over to the beast and whispered in his ear, "You naughty boy! Will you never learn your lesson?"