

Story #528 (1974 Tape #5)

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The Hoca in the Bulgur Basket

Charity not mercantile

Once a hoca and another man's wife were on very good terms. One day when the woman's husband had gone to the mill, the hoca came and knocked on the door. The woman opened the door and let the hoca come in. After chatting for a while, they started to make love, but very soon after that the husband returned from the mill.

"Where shall I hide you?" the woman asked. "If I tried to you in the cupboard, you would be too big for it. I cannot put you in the chest because it is full of clothes. I cannot put you in the grain bin because it is full. The best that I can do is to put you in the bulgur basket and hang you up on the ceiling by the bullock's lead rope, which has forty knots in it [from so much use]."

Well, that is what she did. She hung the hoca up that way, when she looked up at him, she saw that his genitals were dangling down through a hole in the basket, like an eggplant. She said to herself, "If my husband lifts his head and looks up and asks what that is, what shall I say? Why not sing a song to warn him [the hoca] to pull up his 'crowds' [genitals]?" To her husband she said, "Husband, I just remembered a song."

"What song is it?"

"Well, let me sing it, and you listen.

I drive my horse; he walks on the road.

My husband has returned, but who has seen him?

*Song - an vehicle
for man eye*

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Do not move, hoca; your rope is worn.

Woman
Pull up your dangling things; you have exposed me.

"What kind of a song is that?" her husband asked.

"Well, I do not know. I heard it from another person.

Meanwhile, the hoca said to himself, "Apparently my things are dangling down like an eggplant. Let me see if I can pull them up and save the situation." When he tried to pull them up, he moved a little. The rope holding the basket gave way, and he fell to the floor with a terrible crash. Immediately the woman placed her arms around her husband's head to prevent him from seeing this spectacle.

"What happened, woman?" he asked. "Let my head go. Is the roof falling in?"

She completely covered her husband's head and at the same time managed to throw the hoca his shirt, jacket, and shoes. The hoca grabbed them quickly, and in the confusion, he made his escape.

"You almost suffocated me," said the husband. "What was all of that noise?" He looked at the roof and saw that it was just as it had been before.

The wife had been so frightened by this whole incident that she became ill. The next morning she sent her husband to consult with the hoca about her illness, and she sent the hoca some yogurt and butter.

The husband went to the hoca's house and said, "Selâmünaleyküm."

"Aleykümselâm."

"The situation is such and such. When I got home from the mill last night, my wife sang a song. Right then there was a terrible crashing sound. She got on my head and almost strangled me before I could get

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loose and ask, 'What is happening?' Now she is completely overcome with illness. Will you look up her illness in your books?"

"Hand down that thick volume," the hoca said. Then he started turning the pages and shaking his head.

The husband was impatient and asked, "Well, hoca, what do you find?"

"Well, Ahmet Efendi, what visited your house last night was the Angel with Red Testicles and Penis, who does not visit just any house. He visited your house because it is a house of charity and abundance. Do not worry. I shall write a prescription and a muska,¹ and with the help of Allah, she will recover quickly."

The man paid the hoca five or ten liras and returned home. His wife asked him, "What was it?"

"Well, wife, it was the Angel with Red Testicles and Penis who visited us last night. Houses that he visits must have abundance. Thanks to Allah, our house is one of such good fortune. He sent you this medicine to drink and this muska to wear around your neck."

Soon the wife was saying, "Health to the hoca's hands. Thanks to him, I have recovered."

This was the way in which that affair ended.

¹ There is a curious anachronism here in the hoca's giving a "prescription" and a muska. The latter is an amulet made of a prayer written on a small piece of paper and enclosed in a triangular oiled cloth container. This was hung around the neck as a curative or protective agent. The use of the muska was very common in an earlier time when medical "prescriptions" were unknown.