

Story #540 (1974 Tape #6)

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Revised
The Cock, the Fox, and the Renewed Ablutions

Once there was and once there was not, and at that time there lived a cock. This cock had gone to find food on a plain. It was close to sunset, and soon it began to grow dark. Still on the plain and unable to reach home, the cock flew up to the branch of a tree to roost there for the night. There he crowed.

A fox thereupon came running to the foot of the tree and said to the cock, "Efendi!

I came with great interest.

You have chanted the ezan."¹

Then the fox said, "Why don't you come down here so that we can pray together?"

"Very well," said the cock. But then he saw two hunters and a hound approaching, and he said, "Let us wait until the hunters and the hound arrive so that we may have a larger congregation."

Thereupon, the fox, who was afraid of the hunters and the hound, said, "I must go and renew my ablutions."² Saying so, he ran away

¹ The ezan is the call to prayer usually made from the minaret of a mosque. The response given by the fox is more poetic in Turkish than we can render it in English: "Efendi!

Ben de geldim özeni ozeni
Sen de iyi okudun ezeni [ezan]."

² No one can gainsay the fox's departure for such a reason, for anyone participating in a prayer service while in a religiously unclean state negates not only his own prayers but also those of others in the congregation.